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OPINION METER

This week's poll:
Should top CNMI officials agree to a voluntary pay cut as a cost-cutting measure?

Let your voice be heard! Go to www.saipantribune.com to cast your vote.

141 DAYS without a government budget for FY 2009

INSIDE

Flight 3407
Investigators have located key components that might help reveal what the pilot did to try to save Flight 3407.

NATION...Page 14

New Beer
Marpac recently introduced two new beer products: Beck's from Germany and Stella Artois from Belgium.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 18

Road to CDA, NMHC offices on Rota blocked. **PAGE 2**
House may bring up FY 2009 budget today. **PAGE 3**

ON FEDERALIZATION

'If Fitial asks for the delay, he will get it'

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan smiles as he answers questions from members of the Rotary Club of Saipan about the $96 million that the CNMI stands to get from the $787 billion economic stimulus package during the club's weekly meeting at the Hyatt Regency yesterday. Looking on is Rotary Club president Ben Babauta.

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan yesterday reiterated his call for Gov. Benigno R. Fitial to ask Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano for a 180-day delay in the implementation of the federalization law.

RELATED NEWS
DHS' Customs Division eyes office at airport building.
PAGE 7

"Governor Fitial needs to ask for it. If he asks, he will get it," Sablan said during the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of

See FITIAL on Page 4

Govt fighting for stimulus money

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

Local government officials are scrambling so the CNMI can have a shot at receiving a slice of the $787 billion stimulus package.

See GOVT on Page 4

> *At the end of the day we don't want to be standing, looking at each other, and pointing fingers at each other. That's going to be unacceptable. Now is the time.*
> —House Speaker Arnold Palacios

NMI won't be able to meet the deadline to close dump

Govt to ask EPA for an extension

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
Six years after it was closed to the public, the Puerto Rico dump has yet to see construction activities for its closure to comply with a long-standing U.S. Environmental Protection Agency order.

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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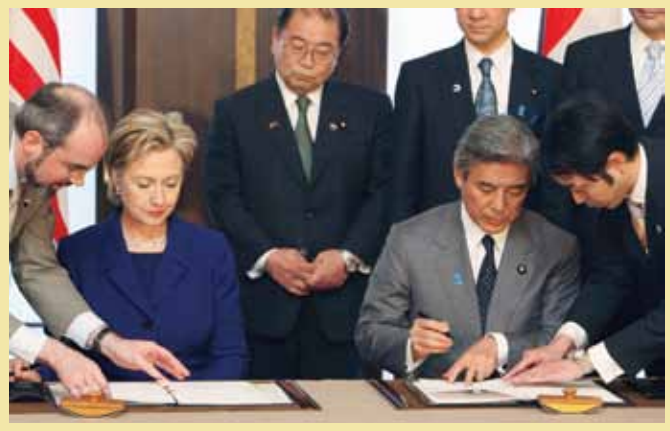
REPORTER

The CNMI will be asking the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for additional time to comply with a longstanding administrative order to completely close the Puerto Rico dump by February 2010.

With only a year before deadline, local and federal permits for the dump closure have yet

See NMI on Page 4

US, Japan ink pact to move Marines to Guam by 2014



AP
Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton, left, signs an agreement with Japan's Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone at the Iikura Guest House in Tokyo, Japan Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009.

By ERIC TALMADGE
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TOKYO (AP)—Hoping to give new momentum to a plan to rework the deployment of U.S. troops in the Pacific, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton signed an agreement yesterday

See US on Page 4

Local

Road to CDA, NMHC offices on Rota blocked

DPS allegedly failed to take action; judge issues TRO vs landowners

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth L. Govendo has issued a temporary restraining order to prevent three landowners from harassing or contacting the Commonwealth Development Authority and the Northern Marianas Housing and their staff on Rota.

In the order issued Friday, Govendo ordered Dianne Manglona Quitugua, Evelyn Manglona Mendiola, and Glenn H. Manglona or any of their representatives to immediately remove all obstructions or barriers such as ropes or cars blocking access to CDA's property.

The judge also directed the respondents to immediately remove any and all "no trespassing" signs or other messages discouraging any person's access to CDA's property.

Govendo ordered the Department of Public Safety, including its Rota branch, to enforce the order immediately.

Govendo directed the respondents to appear in court on Saipan today, Wednesday, to explain why the TRO should not be granted.

Saipan Tribune learned from CDA yesterday that, because of the TRO, the barriers have already been removed.

CDA and NMHC on Friday filed a petition to stop Dianne and Glenn Manglona and Mendiola from blocking any person's or entity's access to CDA's property on Rota.

Attorney F. Matthew Smith, lawyer for the petitioners, stated that in November 2006, CDA was granted a default judgment against Mr. Manglona's ex-wife, Aloyse M. Manglona, in a civil lawsuit.

In both judgments, Smith said, the court found that if Mr. and Mrs. Manglona fail to pay their debts to CDA within the time prescribed, then CDA could sell all of their rights and interests in a parcel of real property on Rota.

Smith said that, on April 3, 2008, after Mr. and Mrs. Manglona failed to pay the judgments against them, CDA was granted a writ of execution against the lot, and the property was ordered seized and sold at public auction.

The auction was held on July 18, 2008, and all of Mr. and Mrs. Manglona's rights, title, and interest in the lot were subsequently sold to CDA.

Smith said that despite these facts, on several occasions in the latter part of 2008, Mr. Manglona and his family harassed and intimidated CDA's previous tenant on the property until the tenant was forced to move out.

Smith alleged that Rota DPS was asked several times to address these trespassers and hold Mr. Manglona accountable for his criminal actions, but the island's police failed to take action.

CDA's property on Rota is a commercial property, but is landlocked behind another parcel of real property. The property in the front is owned by Dianne Quitugua, Evelyn M. Mendiola, Glenn H. Manglona, and other Manglona family members.

The property in the front contains an easement in a road that allows access to CDA's property in the rear portion.

Smith said the easement was created and used previously by the Manglona family for years to access the lot, and it is the only means of access to CDA's property.

After the Manglona family forced out CDA's first tenant on the property, Smith said, CDA made the decision to begin using the property for its own offices.

NMHC, as a tenant of CDA, also moved its offices to the property.

Last Thursday, Smith said, Dianne Quitugua posted a "no trespassing" sign near the easement in the road, and also put up a rope across the easement in the road, blocking CDA's and NMHC's access to the property.

On Friday, the lawyer said, Evelyn Mendiola moved a broken-down vehicle to further block CDA's and NMHC's access to the easement.

Smith said he and CDA have made numerous attempts to get Rota DPS to take action, stop the trespassing, remove the obstructions, and allow CDA and NMHC access to the property. But Rota DPS has consistently declined to take any action against the Manglona family, he said.

"Due to Glenn H. Manglona's prior trespasses on the property, and the family's intimidation and harassment of CDA's previous tenant, CDA, NMHC, and their employees and clients all have justifiable concern for their health, welfare and safety," Smith said.

He said NMHC's programs are created by federal mandate and overseen by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and that interruption of NMHC's services threatens these important federal programs.

He underscored the importance of TRO in order to allow CDA, NMHC, and their employees and agents access to the property, and to protect them from immediate and irreparable harm.

NMC asked to disclose turnover rate of personnel

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

A local activist group is urging the Northern Marianas College to disclose the turnover rate of the college's faculty and personnel in the last four years and has filed an Open Government Act and Freedom of Information request to obtain it.

Taotao Tano CNMI Inc. president Greg Cruz Jr. said they are making the request to shed light on allegations that NMC president Carmen Fernandez terminates employees without due process or retaliates against them.

The Open Government Act was filed last Friday.

Cruz said Taotao Tano is concerned about the issues besieging the college, especially at this critical time when NMC's accreditation is in jeopardy.

"We have always supported NMC on matters pertaining to student education and funding issues to include political interference from the outside world…but instilling fear and retaliation upon faculty or employees is a serious concern for us. We are disappointed in these issues," Cruz told Fernandez.

The Taotao Tano leader included a long list of concerns in his request, mostly pertaining to personnel issues. However, most are exempted from the Open Government Act because of confidentiality issues.

On top of the list are the names of new hires and their salaries and the employees and faculty who were terminated, forced to resign, or voluntarily resigned from the college from calendar year 2006 up to the present.

To make a better judgment and analysis of personnel data, Cruz also asked to be furnished all the names of NMC employees, faculty, as well as the existing board members.

Taotao Tano also seemed interested in knowing more about the operation of the Board of Regents, past and present, as it added to the list questions about their compensations and reimbursements.

Fernandez's salary and other benefits received from the college were also asked by the group as well as the president's travel expenditures since 2006.

In his request, the Taotao Tano leader also want to know of payments made to staff or faculty who are not actually reporting to the college but are home under an administrative leave and receiving compensations.

Without elaborating, Cruz wants NMC to disclose the amount it paid to the service of Claudio Norita, a former lawmaker and ex-executive director at the Commonwealth Ports Authority.

Cruz described the issues at the college "serious and critical concerns."

"Serious and critical concerns have risen internally and I would like to remind [the president] and the constituents that NMC is no place for politics. The stability and integrity of NMC is now tainted and compromised and reports of abuse of authority and gross negligence is surfacing under [the president's] watch," Cruz said, adding that the group will be closely monitoring any form of retribution or retaliation upon any employee or faculty and "such attempts will certainly validate concerns."

Saipan Tribune learned that Fernandez had called for a meeting with the Taotao Tano group yesterday at 3pm to discuss the matter.

In a separate letter addressed to Board of Regents chair Charles V. Cepeda yesterday, the Taotao Tano leader labeled the official's earlier remarks as unprofessional and biased.

He said it is improper for Cepeda to take sides.

"Allegations, complaints, concerns—true or not—you never take sides, you stay neutral. You look, listen, and understand the situation and evaluate the problem before you act on anything," Cruz told Cepeda in his letter.

By doing so, Cruz said, this will show some respect and sensitivity to the true nature of the situation.

"Find a positive and sound solution to the situation for both parties involved," he said.

Cruz says Cepeda seemed threatening when he said that "everybody is going to be in a difficult situation if they favor indirect and hidden agenda."

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House may bring up FY 2009 budget today

Second man in passport switch enters guilty plea

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

A man who was arrested on suspicion of being involved in the illegal operation of a taxicab posed as another person by presenting authorities with another individual's passport and agreeing to be deported to China.

Authorities only discovered Jiang Zhejun's switching passport scheme at the Saipan International Airport on deportation day.

Zhejun, 29, was charged with misuse of a passport yesterday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

Zhejun signed a plea agreement with the U.S. government. He pleaded guilty to the information charging him with one count of misuse of a passport.

U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson accepted the defendant's guilty plea and set the sentencing for May 26 at 9am.

Misuse of a passport carries a maximum imprisonment of 10 years in prison and $250,000 fine.

Under the plea agreement, the recommended range of imprisonment is between zero to six months in jail and a fine between $1,000 to $10,000 if the court decides a defendant has the ability to pay a fine.

Munson remanded the defendant back to the custody of the U.S. Marshal.

According to the charging information, on July 18, 2008, Zhejun used and attempted to use a People's of China passport issued and designed for the sole use of another person named Yin Minghao. Zhejun surrendered Minghao's passport to local authorities, posing as Minghao.

According to the plea agreement, on July 17, 2008, police officer Chris Guerrero stopped and questioned Zhejun on suspicion of driving an illegal taxicab.

Zhejun informed Guerrero that he was Minghao. He was subsequently arrested for failing to comply with the terms and conditions of Minghao's entry into the CNMI.

On July 18, Zhejun used Minghao's passport by surrendering it to CNMI immigration officials as a condition of his release. On Aug. 14, Zhejun agreed to deportation as a result of his arrest under Minghao's name.

Last Aug. 16, the defendant drove with Minghao to the Saipan International Airport for his scheduled deportation (posing as Minghao).

CNMI Immigration investigator John Peter met the defendant at the airport and assisted him with checking in by providing the airline with Minghao's passport and subsequently gave the passport to Zhejun.

Zhejun then evaded Peter and met Minghao at the airport parking lot to give the passport back to Minghao.

Minghao then attempted to leave Saipan on the flight that Zhejun was to board (posing as himself).

Zhejun left the airport and failed to depart the CNMI.

Minghao, 27, had also pleaded guilty to one count of misuse of a passport. His sentencing was set for April 7.

By KRISTI EATON
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REPORTER

The House of Representatives could take up the budget issue once again today.

Last week, the House deferred voting to override Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's veto of the Legislature's second attempt at passing the $156.76 million Fiscal Year 2009 budget.

The House decided to put off the vote because majority of members did not think there were enough lawmakers present to pass an override. Only 17 of the 20 members were present last week. Fourteen votes are needed for an override. The Senate, meanwhile, already passed a bill overriding the governor's veto.

House Speaker Arnold Palacios said he's not sure if the vote will occur today, but it will happen eventually, "one way or another. "

Palacios

"We're going to vote on it regardless, whether we have the numbers or not," he said. "We will all vote with our conscious and sense of commitment to public policy. I think we've gone around and around and around on this issue. I think at the end of the day each of us must articulate our own reason for our own vote and position."

Some members requested additional time to review the governor's veto message, Palacios said.

Fitial vetoed the latest budget attempt because of a lack of austerity measures in the bill. The Legislature's second attempt reduced the budget by $8 million per Fitial's first veto, but did not include measures like unpaid holidays.

A few minutes after the House deferred action on the override, Rep. Victor B. Hocog introduced an administration-supported measure that reinstates austerity Fridays/unpaid holidays, cuts employer contribution to the Retirement Fund from 18 percent to 11 percent, and grants full reprogramming power to all expenditure authorities. Under House Bill 16-223, top officials including the governor, lieutenant governor, lawmakers, justices, and judges are encouraged to waive 10 percent of their salaries.

Rep. Tina Sablan, who last week raised concerns about alleged favors offered in exchange for not supporting an override, said the Senate showed courage by approving the override.

Sablan noted that a budget has never been passed during an election year because of gamesmanship. The fallback plan has always been to institute austerity measures and give unlimited reprogramming authority, she said.

The representative questioned why all but one member supported the passage of the budget initially, but now the House is struggling to get 14 votes for an override.

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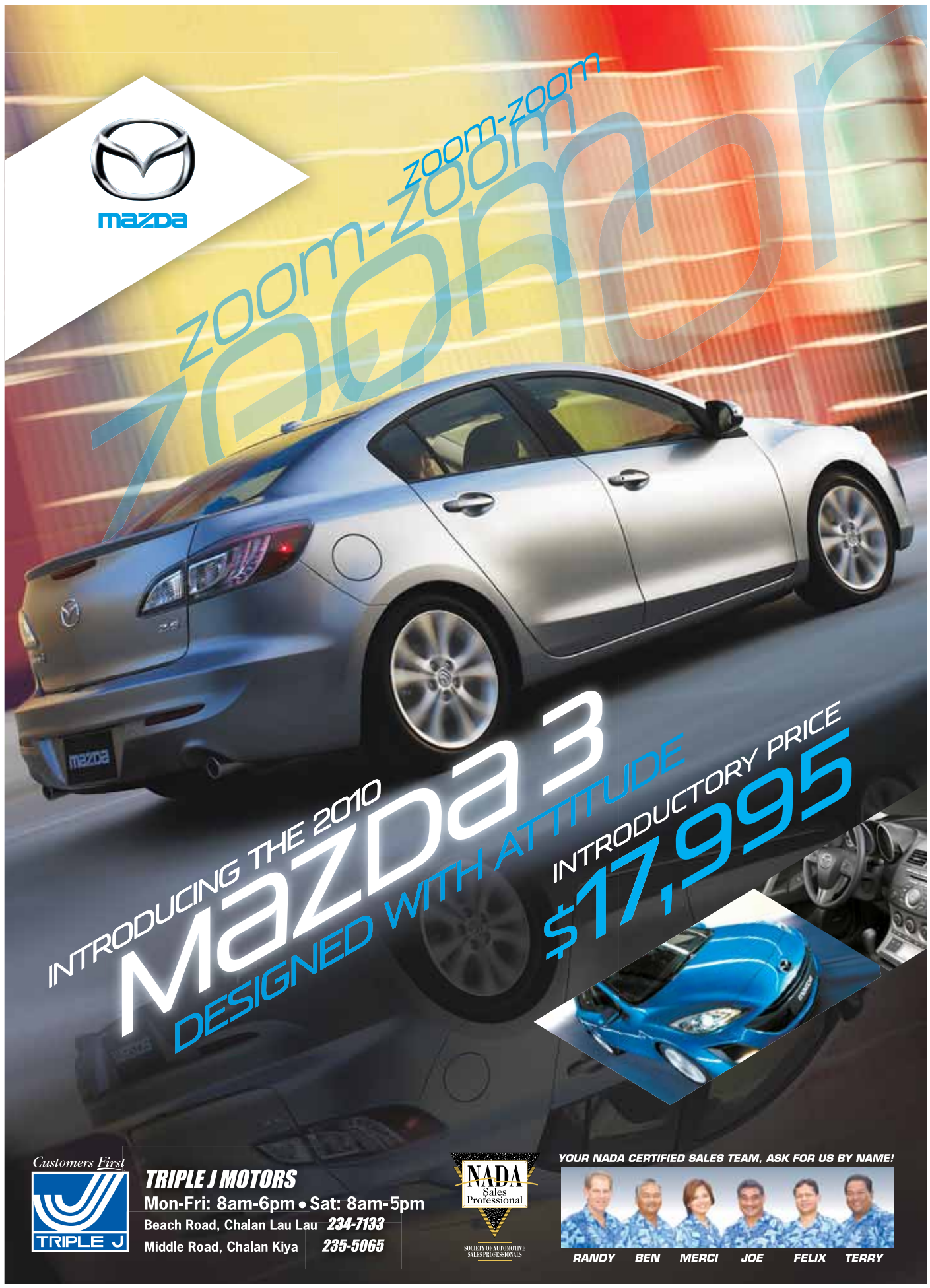

Pilot 'green energy' project launched at SSHS today

The CNMI is taking a step into the future of alternative energy, independence from fossil fuel and air emissions reduction.

A cooperative effort between Allied Pacific Environmental Consulting Inc. and Concorde Garment Manufacturing Co. is providing Saipan Southern High School with a "Green Energy" system that will power the school's science laboratory and wastewater system, back spin their electrical meter and will also provide students with a natural science curriculum.

APEC is spearheading this joint project and has installed a Skystream 3.7 wind turbine and nine Kyocera 18V solar panels at Saipan Southern High School. A "green meter" component of the system will allow students and other observers to track wind and solar energy input, individual system component energy production and overall energy production.

This environmental friendly pilot renewable energy system is designed to generate electricity, be non-reliant on fossil fuel and to have zero air emissions.

APEC project manager Robert Jordan stated: "After climbing the initially steep learning curve associated with this project, APEC is glad to announce that it foresees that this will be the first of many similar projects in our region."

APEC president Tom Polevich stated: "With this pilot renewable energy project, the CNMI is taking a major step forward into the future of alternative energy use, fossil fuel independence and air emission reduction. The CNMI, SSHS, Concorde Manufacturing and the U.S. EPA are all winners with this project."

A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held today at 10am at the SSHS campus, the day that the system will officially be declared fully operational.

This project was facilitated through the cooperative efforts of the Public School System, CUC's Power Division, Department Public Works Energy and Building Code Divisions, CNMI Division of Environmental Quality, CNMI Historic Preservation Office, Commonwealth Zoning Board and the Governor's Office. ***(PR)***

FITIAL

From Page 1

Saipan at the Hyatt Regency.

CNMI officials and private businesses say the immigration law will bring further harm to the CNMI economy. They said the CNMI stands to lose millions in tourism revenue as a result of the exclusion of Chinese and Russian tourists from the visa waiver program.

Sablan already wrote to Napolitano on Feb. 9 to delay the June 1 start of the transition period in which the federal government will regulate CNMI immigration but he said the most appropriate official to send a request is the CNMI governor.

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial earlier said he will personally hand a letter to Napolitano when he meets with her during his trip to Washington, D.C. this week and next week on official function.

Press secretary Charles P. Reyes Jr. said the governor appreciates Sablan deferring to the Office of the Governor but he also respects the Office of the Delegate.

Sablan, in his remarks at the Rotary Club, talked about the $96 million that the CNMI stands to get from the $787 billion economic stimulus package or the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act that the U.S. Congress passed last week.

He said much of this new federal fund will go to education, along with road, water and sewer systems and to train workers. He said CNMI taxpayers will also receive a tax credit of up to $400 for individuals and up to $800 for couples meeting the eligibility requirements.

Sablan also reiterated his call for the governor to hire someone whose sole responsibility is to apply for and obtain all possible funding available for the CNMI under the stimulus package.

This was Sablan's first speaking engagement at the Rotary Club since he got elected as the CNMI's first delegate to the U.S. Congress. He said the past six weeks have been among the busiest times of his life, including attending caucuses, meetings with congressional members and staff, as well as "walking three miles" to watch the inauguration of President Obama.

He also told Rotary Club members and guests that the CNMI's past relationship with disgraced Washington, D.C. lobbyist Jack Abramoff, as well as its heavy reliance on foreign workers when there are lots of local residents without jobs, continues to be brought up in the nation's capital. This, he said, despite "99 percent of the people in the Marianas have not met Abramoff."

"It's not helping our image there…Image is important," he said, adding that he continues to build good working relationship with members of Congress, Homeland Security and other federal agencies.

NMI

From Page 1

to be released, thereby pushing back the issuance of an invitation-to-bid and the award of contract for re-contouring the waste mound, placing a liner and other construction activities at the site, *Saipan Tribune* learned yesterday.

Construction at the site alone will require 12 months from the issuance of a notice-to-proceed to the company that will be awarded the contract, making it impossible to meet the February 2010 deadline.

The total project cost is estimated to be between $7 million and $10 million.

The Coastal Resources Management Office has yet to issue a major siting permit for the Puerto Rico dump closure.

According to CRM yesterday, it will take two to three more weeks for the permit to be issued.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also has yet to issue a "404 Permit," as the project involves certain activities conducted in areas regulated by the federal agency, including wetlands, streams, rivers and other U.S. waters. In the case of the Puerto Rico dump closure, there are mudflats, sea grasses and mangroves that need to be dealt with.

The dump has portions reaching 80 to 100 feet from the ground. It was closed to public dumping in February 2003. Right now, the dump is covered by natural vegetation.

Steve Hiney, solid waste technical consultant for the Department of Public Works, said yesterday the U.S. EPA has been informed throughout the process of the need to extend the deadline and that "the request is just formality."

He said at this stage, the CNMI is in compliance with the U.S. EPA order.

"There really are no stumbling blocks at this point. It is just the time required to solicit public comments that is associated with all permits. The CNMI has received indications that the regulatory agencies are satisfied with our submittals," Hiney said.

He said once all permits are secured, DPW can issue the invitation to bid for the dump closure within four to six weeks.

"The construction schedule is set at 12 months from notice to proceed," Hiney added.

The CNMI government has chosen a "restricted access closure" option to completely close the dump.

Major components of this dump closure project include the re-contouring of the waste mound, and placing a high-density polyethylene and geosynthetic clay liner system, overlaid by a drainage layer and vegetative layer.

There will also be landscaping, landfill gas management system, groundwater monitoring wells, and fencing.

If additional funding becomes available, the project may also involve park amenities, including putting up benches.

The plan is to convert the dump into a public park but due to limited funding, the current focus is to completely close the dump to comply with the EPA administrative order.

DPW has hired HK Pangelinan and Associates as construction manager for the project.

In 2006, the US EPA cited the closure of the Puerto Rico dump on Saipan as one of its Pacific environmental enforcement accomplishments for the year.

The federal agency said an agreement with the CNMI government outlining the closure of the Puerto Rico dump includes a schedule with deadlines for a financing plan, design and construction of final closure, and post-closure monitoring.

It said at various times, inspectors have observed contaminated storm water and leachate ponding at the dump and flowing into the Tanapag Lagoon.

The Puerto Rico dump has been a source of water pollution for over 50 years and the final closure will greatly reduce the dump's adverse impacts to the surrounding ocean ecosystem, said the U.S. EPA.

GOVT

From Page 1

With President Obama expected to sign the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act today in Denver, Colorado, the CNMI has a chance to receive as much as $96 million for projects. But because the insular areas were unsuccessful in their attempt to allow the Interior Department to distribute their portion, the CNMI must apply and compete against other local governments for any money it receives.

Gov. Benigno Fitial has named Commerce Secretary Michael Ada as the point person within the Executive Branch for the application process.

Ada is asking department heads to identify possible projects that are "shovel ready," identify what the federal funding source is and begin the application process. By Friday, he said he hopes to have the application process started, although he will not be writing the applications for each department.

"The Governor has made it clear that this is a priority, and this needs to happen, like, now," Ada said.

'Time is of the essence'

As with other areas, the CNMI will have its work cut out for it.

Time is of the essence, Ada said. Many of the projects have strict timeframes because the money is supposed to be used quickly.

For example, Ada said, under normal federal grant guidelines a local agency must go through a local point of contact such as a governor. The grant application is released to the public for comment and once finalized the governor can sign off on it, but that can take many days.

Also, if the projects require local matching funds, that will be difficult for the cash-strapped CNMI, Ada said.

Another issue is the expenditure portion, the secretary said.

"The stimulus package is meant to get money into the economy as fast as possible. Local agencies will put [the money] out in the community in the form of contracts, but the problem is the timeframe is very limited. If we get the money, there is a procurement period, [and] that timeframe for bidding may bite into the timeframe to spend money. If somebody protests the bidding, that takes another 30 days."

In most federal grants, he added, money is not deemed expended until it is in the account of the vendor, which is sometimes a problem for the CNMI. People refer to millions of dollars in unused Capital Improvement Plan funding, but the CNMI is not sitting on it, Ada said. It just can't be taken off the books until it's in the vendor's account.

"The drawdown of the funds becomes an issue," he said.

Some states have created commissions or hired specialists to oversee the stimulus money, but that's not something the Commonwealth can do, Ada said.

"You've got to remember we're an insular area. To get someone in here who understands the needs on why this project is so critical is hard," Ada said. "The whole thing is a bunch of paperwork. Other governments can afford to do that. Our government is trying to leverage its resources," he said, adding that department heads should be knowledgeable on how to obtain the necessary resources.

Difficult

The CNMI has the ability to compete for the money like any other jurisdiction, but it will be difficult, delegate Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan said. He has urged the administration to work quickly and wisely in obtaining the funding.

House Speaker Arnold Palacios said he and other members of the Legislature are concerned about the government's ability to compete for the grants.

"I hope, I said this a month ago, when the stimulus package was still in a proposal form, I hope the Commonwealth government, particularly the Executive Branch, is ready to execute this particular package. Otherwise we're going to get left behind again," he said, citing the millions of dollars in CIP funds.

The agencies need to ask themselves if they are on the ball and ready to deliver, he said.

"At the end of the day we don't want to be standing, looking at each other, and pointing fingers at each other," he said. "That's going to be unacceptable. Now is the time. We've been given this opportunity. We need to make the best of it."

The Puerto Rico dump and the Cross Island Road are two projects Palacios said he would like to see receive funding because he believes they are shovel-ready.

"Remember, lose it or use it," the speaker said. "Those states or territories that don't use it will lose it. The last thing we want to do in these dire days of economic challenges is to not be able to execute. I think every state, every city that has this opportunity is looking to get going. Whether or not philosophically you agree with all the press, the national press, whether this is a good thing or a bad thing, the fact of the matter is it's in our lap. Let's make the best of it and get some positive results."

US

From Page 1

with Japan that will move 8,000 Marines off the southern Japanese island of Okinawa to the U.S. territory of Guam.

The framework of the transfer had already been agreed on in 2006, but several major points remain to be worked out, including the location of a base to replace Okinawa's Futenma air station, a major hub for the Marines there.

Officials on both sides have agreed to relocate the operations of the base to another, less crowded part of Okinawa, but local opposition has stalled progress.

"This agreement reflects the commitment we have to modernize our military posture in the Pacific," Clinton said. "It reinforces the core of our alliance — the mission to defend Japan against attack and to deter any attack by all necessary means."

Japan's Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone also hailed the agreement.

"We believe this Guam agreement shows the strength of our alliance," he said. "We agreed to work toward the implementation of the 2006 pact in a manner that does not compromise readiness or capability."

There are currently about 13,000 Marines stationed on Okinawa, and 23,000 U.S. troops there overall. They are part of about 50,000 U.S. troops deployed in Japan under a post-World War II mutual security pact.

The cost of the realignment plan has generated intense debate in Japan.

Guam's transformation is expected to cost at least $15 billion and put some of the U.S. military's highest-profile assets within the fences of a vastly improved network of bases. In the pact signed Tuesday, Japan will spend a total of US$2.8 billion on "projects to develop facilities and infrastructure on Guam" for the relocation of some 8,000 3rd Marine Expeditionary Force personnel and their 9,000 family members from Okinawa by 2014.

On Monday, *The Asahi,* a major newspaper, reported that some of the budget will be used to improve Naval and Air Force facilities on Guam. The daily said that would go against the pact, which has been interpreted to limiting Japanese spending to Marine-related projects.

JUNIOR STATESMEN SUMMER SCHOOL PROGRAM

Some 350 CNMI students join in 18 years

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
haidee_eugenio@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Top high school students wanting to study this summer at any of four prestigious universities in the mainland including Stanford, Princeton, Yale, and Georgetown are urged to apply for full scholarships being offered by the U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs.

For 18 years now, some 350 outstanding high school students from the CNMI have attended the Junior Statesmen Summer School through full tuition and transportation scholarships offered by OIA.

OIA said that 338 students from Guam and 164 from Palau, along with those from the U.S. Virgin Islands and American Samoa, have also attended the Junior Statesmen Summer School.

Jessica Brow, associate director of the Junior Statesmen Summer Programs, yesterday announced that three full scholarships for CNMI students in grades 10 and 11 are being offered by OIA for this summer.

Brow, one of the guest speakers at yesterday's Rotary Club of Saipan meeting at Hyatt Regency, said the scholarships cover all tuition costs and roundtrip transportation to the summer school of the student's choice.

The deadline for scholarship application is on March 6 for the CNMI and Guam.

Tuition, which covers all academic expenses, housing and meals for the month, is $4,695 at Princeton and Georgetown, and $4,395 at Yale and Stanford. Transportation to the school is not included in the tuition.

OIA, in a statement, said CNMI students who do not win an Interior scholarship should not give up hope.

"For many years, the CNMI government has very generously allocated scholarship funds to help defray costs and assist students to be able to attend the program," it said.

The Junior Statesmen Summer School offers a challenging, dynamic academic experience to students who have a passion for politics and government. Students take college-level courses in American government and speech, while developing and polishing their leadership skills.

Highlighting each summer school session is a high-level speakers program that gives students a chance to meet and question legislators, other elected officials, judges, reporters, political campaign consultants, and others in stateside and federal political arena.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Jessica Brow, center, associate director of the Junior Statesmen Summer Programs, addresses members and guests of the Rotary Club of Saipan at the Hyatt Regency yesterday. Looking on are Rotary Club president Ben Babauta, left, and another Rotary guest speaker, CNMI Delegate Gregorio "Kilili" C. Sablan, right.

In recent years, summer school students have met and questioned President Obama, former presidents Bill Clinton and George H.W. Bush, former vice president Dick Cheney, and current Vice President Joe Biden.

According to OIA, each night, summer school students debate controversial issues in a simulation of the U.S. Congress.

Competitive admission

Admission to the Junior Statesmen Summer School is competitive. Admission decisions are based on an applicant's academic achievement, leadership, and interest in politics or government.

"Students getting A's in English and Social Sciences, with good essay and strong interest in politics and have involvement in the community are good candidates [for scholarship]," Brow told *Saipan Tribune*.

To apply, students must submit a copy of their high school grades, a three-page personal essay, and a letter of recommendation from a counselor or teacher.

During her stay on Saipan, Brow can be reached at the Summer Holiday Hotel at 234 3182 or via e-mail at jbrow@jsa.org. Students can also contact OIA field representative Jeff Schorr at 234 8861.

Schools to be visited

Brow will be visiting high schools on Saipan and Tinian to help recruit outstanding students for the summer school and OIA scholarship.

Today, Brow will be visiting Grace Christian Academy, Saipan International School, and Mt. Carmel High School juniors.

On Thursday morning, Brow will be meeting with Mt. Carmel High School sophomores and Kagman High School.

In the afternoon of Thursday, she will be visiting Tinian High School.

On Friday, she will be at Saipan Southern High School, Marianas Baptist Academy, Northern Marianas Academy, and Marianas High School.

Another house intentionally burned

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An abandoned house in Kagman III Phase 1 was reportedly set on fire early Monday morning.

Department of Public Safety spokesperson Lei Ogumoro said yesterday that no one was injured and that police have yet to arrest the suspect or suspects. Investigation is ongoing.

Ogumoro said DPS received a report about the fire at 4:08am and firefighters immediately responded to the scene.

She said firefighters had the blaze under control by 4:27am on the same day.

Based on preliminary investigation, the wooden tin house was already burned and had collapsed when firefighters arrived at the scene.

Ogumoro said investigators discovered that an electrical drop line that should have connected the house's electrical meter to the Commonwealth Utilities Corp.'s power pole was not there.

The owner of the house is unknown at this time, according to Ogumoro.

She said investigators learned that the house, measuring about 240 square feet, has been unoccupied for some time now.

"Based on their findings, investigators stated that the house was intentionally set on fire," Ogumoro said.

Last Feb. 5, an unoccupied house in Afetnas was also reportedly intentionally set ablaze by an unidentified person or persons.

DPS said nobody was injured and no one has been arrested in that blaze.

Dandan school to publish students' books

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Dandan Elementary School will launch its first published books written by students in celebration next month of Young Author's Day—a traditional occasion for all Kindergarten to sixth grade pupils at the Dandan campus.

DES principal Jonas Barcinas said yesterday that each student from third to sixth grade were asked to publish their own books to be showcased in the school's book fair, also slated for March.

"Our school, chaired by our third graders, will also be publishing all our books in hardbound. The books will be sent to Scholastic for publishing," Barcinas told *Saipan Tribune*, adding that DES is going to be the first school to send books from Rota students.

He said it is the school's plan to invite parents to the weeklong book fair to see the students' hard work.

To create more excitement for the occasion, Barcinas said this year's celebration will also see the participation of local authors like Dianne T. Torres, Lino Olopai, Manny Borja, Katharyn Tuten-Puckett, and Bob Coldeen. They are expected to share their stories and inspire young talents to continue their interest in reading and writing stories.

"We will also encourage our parents and community leaders as well as the business sector to come and join us in the celebration by reading to the kids in the classrooms," Barcinas said.

Dandan, one of the performing public schools, will be visited by an accreditation team next week. It is hoping to get its six-year accreditation from the Western Association of Schools and Colleges.

Cultural Day

The school will also be holding its Cultural Day in March. This will be the school's 10th year of holding the event.

Barcinas said it is their objective to both bring fun to the kids and the community and raise money for the needs of the school that could not be funded by local appropriations.

Every year, a popularity contest is held on campus, during which the Cultural Day King and Queen are named. As of yesterday, 40 candidates have confirmed joining the event. Coronation is slated for May 30.

"This is a PTA and DES fundraising event to help build our computer laboratory room and the awning in front of the main office to help prevent our kids from getting wet when it's rainy season," the principal said, adding that during the occasion, private agencies can also display their products or educational resources to the public.

Also invited for presentations are the Korean association, Palau, Filipino, and other ethnic groups in the community.

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BRUCE L. MAILMAN is a member of the American Immigration Lawyers Association and has provided immigration services in the CNMI since 1989
MAYA B. KARA is a former CNMI Acting Attorney General, Chief Legislative Counsel, Governor's and Lt. Governor's Legal Counsel and DOL Hearing Officer

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT RESTROOM REPAIRS AND WATER PUMP IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-002-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested firms for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) Design Services.

The general scope of work is for A/E design services for general improvements made to all restrooms at the international terminal buildings and upgrades to the water pump system at the Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. These improvements consist of, but are not limited to, restroom door and fixture replacements and replacement of the water pump motor and controls.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification from firms should address the areas generally described below:

1. Overall A/E design experience in the Pacific area and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands;
2. A/E Design experience related to CPA projects funded in whole or in part by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA);
3. Level of proficiency in performing A/E services promptly; and level of experience with the FAA and AIP grants;
4. The general reputation of the firm in terms of quality of A/E work experience and services performed for AIP projects, and the firm's professional integrity and competence; and
5. Resumes of key personnel including current licenses and registrations of principal, if applicable.

Interested firms must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies each of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **4:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 11, 2009.**

Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330. Only firms who have established an office in the Commonwealth and a valid business license will be considered.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

Send information to:
Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE
Executive Director/Contracting Officer
Commonwealth Ports Authority
P.O. Box 501055
Saipan, MP 96950-1055

/s/ Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: February 17, 2009

NMC's nursing instructor gets distinguished award

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Northern Marianas College nursing instructor Cindy Tice. NMC

Cindy Tice, a nursing instructor at the Northern Marianas College, was recently awarded the 2009 Distinguished Alumni Award by the College of Wooster.

Tice was notified of the award by David Gillis, who sits on the Wooster Alumni Board and chairs the Distinguished Alumni Award Committee.

According to Gillis, the award is the "highest award given to our alumni by the Alumni Association and the College."

Tice will be honored at the Distinguished Alumni Award Ceremony in Ohio on June 5, 2009, as part of Wooster's Alumni Weekend event.

The Distinguished Alumni Award is presented annually to alumni who have distinguished themselves in one or more of the following areas: professional career; service to humanity; and service to Wooster.

Some of the recent recipients of the award include Donald L. Kohn, vice chairman of the Federal Reserve; Stanley C. Gault, former CEO of Rubbermaid Corp.; Timothy P. Smucker, chairman of the J.M. Smucker Co.; and Susan Q. Stranahan, Pulitzer Prize winning writer.

The College of Wooster is an independent liberal arts college, founded in 1866 and nationally recognized for an innovative curriculum that emphasizes independent learning.

The college is located in Wooster, Ohio, a community of 26,000, approximately 55 miles southwest of Cleveland.

NMC president Dr. Carmen Fernandez lauded Tice's achievement.

"We congratulate and thank her for bringing such distinction to the college," said Fernandez.

Tice said she is humbled by the recognition.

"I am truly humbled by this recognition by other alumni at Wooster," said Tice. "I have always enjoyed my profession and teaching it to young people, and to be recognized for doing what I love is a wonderful thing."

Tice has been a nursing instructor at NMC for more than 11 years.

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT DRAINAGE SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS/UPGRADE PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-003-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested firms for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) Design Services.

The general scope of work is for A/E design services for improvements and upgrades to the drainage system at the Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. These improvements consist of roof repairs and diversion of the roof drainage system at the arrival, departure and corridors.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification from firms should address the areas generally described below:

1. Overall A/E design experience in the Pacific area and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands;
2. A/E Design experience related to CPA projects funded in whole or in part by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA);
3. Level of proficiency in performing A/E services promptly; and level of experience with the FAA and AIP grants;
4. The general reputation of the firm in terms of quality of A/E work experience and services performed for AIP projects, and the firm's professional integrity and competence; and
5. Resumes of key personnel including current licenses and registrations of principal, if applicable.

Interested firms must submit one (1) original and four (4) copies each of their statements of professional qualifications no later than **4:30 p.m., Wednesday, March 11, 2009.**

Statements of qualification must be presented by a combination of both brochures and the use of current U.S. Government Standard Form 330. Only firms who have established an office in the Commonwealth and a valid business license will be considered.

The CPA reserves the right to reject any or all statements of professional qualification for any reason, if in its sole opinion to do so would be in its best interest.

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/s/ Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: February 17, 2009

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REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATION STATEMENTS FOR ARCHITECTURAL/ENGINEERING DESIGN SERVICES

SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT COMMUTER TERMINAL IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-004-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is soliciting statements of professional qualifications from interested firms for Architectural/Engineering (A/E) Design Services.

The general scope of work is for A/E design services for improvements to the Commuter Terminal located at the Saipan International Airport, Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands. These improvements consist of roof repairs, renovations to the interior of the terminal and limited renovations to the exterior to the terminal.

At a minimum, the statements of professional qualification from firms should address the areas generally described below:

1. Overall A/E design experience in the Pacific area and especially in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands;
2. A/E Design experience related to CPA projects funded in whole or in part by the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA);
3. Level of proficiency in performing A/E services promptly; and level of experience with the FAA and AIP grants;
4. The general reputation of the firm in terms of quality of A/E work experience and services performed for AIP projects, and the firm's professional integrity and competence; and
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Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: February 17, 2009

NMPASI wants to keep Family Hope Center

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

If the cycle grant for the Family Hope Center is renewed, the Northern Marianas Protection & Advocacy Systems Inc. will push for the permanent operation of the program under its supervision, according to executive director Jim Rayphand.

Although NMPASI came into the picture to merely continue the program, he said there is no plan yet to transfer it to a new operator.

"To my knowledge, there has not been any talk by members of the Council for Developmental Disabilities to transfer the program away from NMPASI. At present, we expect to maintain the program through the end of the grant period, which will be at the end of this fiscal year," Rayphand told *Saipan Tribune*.

Should Family Hope Center's funding source be renewed, he said NMPASI will consider keeping the program as he feels it is a perfect fit in terms of the purpose of the program and NMPASI's objectives to conduct and facilitate trainings related to the needs of individuals with disabilities and provide direct representation for individuals with disabilities.

The Family Hope Center's operation was transferred to NMPASI after the Association of Families with Disabilities in the CNMI returned the program to the council. It receives between $150,000 and $200,000 in grant money for its operation.

The transfer was sealed in a memorandum of agreement signed by the council and NMPASI last December.

Rayphand said since they finalized the agreement, NMPASI hired two new staff to work exclusively for Family Hope Center, also known as Family Support 360 program.

"In lieu of a physical site for a center on Tinian and Rota, we are leveraging funds from the program and existing Protection & Advocacy programs to facilitate visits by our staff to the islands of Tinian and Rota wherein they can provide advocacy and, in the case of the Family Hope Center staff, social services," Rayphand said.

Since December, their staff have already been to Tinian and Rota twice with approximately 20 new requests for services from those islands. Additionally, he added, the physical site of the center on Saipan has been used regularly by various members of the council network for trainings and meetings.

NMPASI currently administers seven federal grant programs, all carrying out similar if not duplicate functions as those of the Family Support 360 program—the System Navigators make an ideal addition to the current NMPASI staffing of Client Advocates, Projects Specialists, and Program Aides, all of which are involved in efforts to gather information using intake forms for the purpose of establishing eligibility; developing individualized family plans, and implementing plans to assist eligible families to navigate the local systems of service which are the primary responsibilities of the System Navigators.

DHS' Customs Division eyes station office at airport departure building

BY MONETH G. DEPOSA
moneth_deposa@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Homeland Security's Customs and Border Division is planning to set up an office at the airport after it inquired with the Commonwealth Ports Authority about space availability, according to CPA executive director Efrain S. Camacho yesterday.

Camacho said that, although the federal Transportation Security Administration has a station office at the airport's terminal building, he believes the area may not enough for its expanded federal duties in the CNMI starting June 1, when the federalization of local immigration and labor systems sets in.

Saipan Tribune learned that TSA has an office at the second floor of the terminal facility; it will be transferred to the ground floor of the departure building.

Camacho said the idea is to set up a new and bigger station office for both TSA and Customs and Border Division starting June.

The executive director disclosed that TSA has been exploring the idea of a "bigger office" for many years now.

"Even before this federalization issue, TSA has been looking for a bigger space and it has been in the works for many years," he said, adding that the new inquiry was recently made to CPA by the federal agency.

Like other airport tenants, CPA will charge the TSA on the space lease based on current rates.

"From the second floor of the terminal building, they will move to the ground floor below the duty-free shop at the departure area. They will be renting the space based on rates provided to other airport tenants," Camacho said.

Although the lease agreement has yet to be finalized, the ports authority chief said a lease agreement is usually for up to five years.

"The discussion started last month…and the space [they want] is available," he said.

Besides working under federal guidelines, Camacho believes that federalization will create no major impact on the operation of the ports authority, which remains an autonomous agency of the local government.

"I don't see a major effect on our operation…because the immigration and the customs divisions are completely separate from CPA," Camacho told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday, adding that the ports authority will remain the operator of the facility.

Historical Society expands program for needy children

The Northern Marianas Judiciary Historical Society, a non-profit corporation, has expanded to Tinian and Rota its campaign to provide essential school supplies to needy public school students.

Under the Historical Society's 2009 *Ta Fan Eskuela* (Let's Go To School) campaign, school supplies will be distributed to the CNMI's 12 elementary schools, including Tinian Elementary School and Sinapalo Elementary School on Rota.

Historical Society executive director Gin Gridley said yesterday that, although the program started benefiting students solely on Saipan, they have expanded the campaign to Tinian and Rota.

"Each school will be receiving 10 bags stocked with essential school supplies from the Historical Society. The school principal will then be responsible for determining the 10 children from their school who would most benefit from the donation," Gridley said.

The Historical Society will launch this year's campaign at the Gregorio T. Camacho School today, Wednesday, at 12pm.

The Historical Society started the *Ta Fan Eskuela* campaign in 2001 with the goal of providing essential school supplies to needy public school students.

"Our children attend school with a strong desire to learn, and everyone deserves to learn without worrying about their basic school needs being met. Thank you for your support in assisting CNMI students in learning and flourishing intellectually," Gridley said.

Gridley may be contacted at 236-9715 or at gin.gridley@justice.gov.mp if anyone wants to get more information about the program. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

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CULTURAL EXCHANGE CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Students of the Awaji High School Ichinomiya Branch visit the Mount Carmel School for cultural exchange activities as part of their school trip to the islands from Feb. 2 to 6, 2009. At the school, they performed the tea ceremony and Japanese traditional and modern dances. The students also attended regular classrooms with local students and cooked some Japanese foods for their friends.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Fellowship hosts movie screening

The Life in the Son Christian Fellowship is hosting a screening of *Fireproof*, a post-Valentine movie event, about a fire captain who runs into burning buildings to save someone he doesn't know while he watches his own marriage burn to the ground. All couples and even singles are invited to watch this life-changing movie about "never leaving your partner behind," on Saturday, Feb. 21, 2009. Movie showing schedule are at 1:30pm, 4:30pm, and 7pm at the Life in the Son Christian Fellowship facility, Chalan Pale Arnold, 2nd Floor of Alpex Showroom. Childcare will be provided for free. Tickets are $3 for couples and $2 for singles or you may give by donation. For tickets or for more information, email lifeintheson@pticom.com or visit www.lifeintheson.net/fireproof or call 285-4949. ***(PR)***

Tinian Chamber of Commerce sets election

The Tinian Chamber of Commerce will conduct its election of 2009 officers on Friday, Feb. 20, at 10:30a, in the Tinian Room at the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino. All members are encouraged to attend.

Applications for membership will be available at the door. Chamber president Don A. Farrell said that only member businesses that have paid the minimum one month due of $10 will be eligible to vote in the election.

Only one vote is allowed for each federal tax identification number, no matter the size of the business. ***(PR)***

Family Bingo fundraiser set

The San Antonio Parish is sponsoring a "Family Bingo" fundraising event this Sunday, Feb. 22, 2009, at the Parish Social Hall, from 11:30am to 5:30pm. Bingo cards will be on sale for 50 cents each and $2 a set. Everyone is invited to, come one come all. ***(PR)***

SSHS PTA meeting set

To all parents and legal guardians of Saipan Southern High School students: There will be a PTA meeting on Wednesday, Feb. 18, 2009, at 6pm in the cafeteria. ***(PR)***

Cupid's Ball at World Resort

Kagman High School's Yearbook Class '09 presents "Cupid's Ball" on Feb. 21, 2009, Saturday, at the Saipan World Resort, from 6pm to 10pm. Entertainment will be provided by Power 99 DJ Niana Dela Cruz, KHS Mr. & Mrs. Cupid, and a fashion show. Ticket prices, which include a dinner buffet, is $20 in advance and $25 at the door. The event requires formal attire, with a theme of gold, red, and black. Tickets available at the 670 Rock Steady Shop. ***(PR)***

Marianas High School schedule

Feb. 27 Cultural Day, 9am-3pm MHS Campus, Open to the public. For questions and concerns, contact 237-3206. ***(PR)***

John Gonzales Live schedule

The public is invited to watch and learn about newsmaking issues on John Gonzales Live on KSPN Channel 2 from 7pm to 8pm. You can participate by text (285-6382), calling (287-4230), or email johngonzales@pticom.com.

- Feb. 18, 2009 LIVE - Replays 2/22 and 2/23 @ 7-8pm. Students and PSS discuss Teen HIV & Unintended Pregnancies
- Feb. 25, 2009 LIVE - Replays 3/1 and 3/2 @ 7-8pm. Farmers & NMC CREES discuss "Modeling Resource Conservation Techniques through Innovative Farm Practices"
- Mar. 4, 2009 LIVE - Replays 3/8 and 3/9 @ 7-8pm. NMPASI discusses "Disability Consumers' Services" in celebration of March 2009 Disability Awareness Month
- Mar. 11, 2009 LIVE - Replays 3/15 and 3/16 @ 7-8pm. Retirement Fund Crisis, NMIRF Board Chair Juan T. Guerrero and Administrator Mark Aguon
- Mar. 18, 2009 LIVE - Replays 3/22 and 3/23 @ 7-8pm. PSS Youth Leaders Advisory Panel (#1)
- Mar. 25, 2009 LIVE - Replays 3/29 and 3/30 @ 7-8pm. PSS Youth Leaders Advisory Panel (#2)

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-DPS-058

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 19, 2009 • TIME: 10:00 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) POLICE PACKAGE MOTORCYCLES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, POLICE TRAFFICE SECTION - SAIPAN"

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PREFERENCE IS AVAILABLE TO US CITIZENS OR PERMANENT RESIDENTS AS PER PUBLIC LAW 15-95 AND AS FURTHER AMENDED BY PUBLIC LAW 15-118 AND MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE BID IF PREFERENCE IS CLAIMED.

/s/ **SANTIAGO F. TUDELA**
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY
CNMI GOVERNMENT

INVITATION TO BID
ITB09-DPS-059

SUBMISSION/OPENING DATE: MARCH 19, 2009 • TIME: 10:30 A.M.

"PURCHASE OF FOUR (4) POLICE PACKAGE MOTORCYCLES / 2-DPS-POLICE TRAFFIC SECTION - TINIAN & 2-DPS-POLICE TRAFFIC SECTION - ROTA"

COPIES OF THE SPECIFICATIONS MAY BE PICKED-UP AT THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR, DIVISION OF PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY, LOWER BASE DR., SAIPAN, DURING REGULAR WORKING HOURS.

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/s/ **SANTIAGO F. TUDELA**
COMMISSIONER OF PUBLIC SAFETY

/s/ **HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

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FRANCISCO C. ADA/SAIPAN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
PUBLIC ADDRESS SYSTEM REPLACEMENT
PROJECT NO. CPA-SA-001-09
DESIGN-BUILD SERVICES

REQUEST FOR INTEREST

The Commonwealth Ports Authority (CPA) is requesting the attendance of all interested parties for the Design and Complete Replacement of the Saipan International Airport's Public Address (PA) System on the Island of Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The scope of work entails the supply and installation of a complete PA system at the entire international terminal building of the Saipan International Airport.

A Pre-Proposal Conference will be held for this project at **2:00 p.m. on Friday, February 27, 2009 at the CPA Airport Conference Room**. All prospective proposers are required to attend. All questions prior to the pre-proposal conference must be submitted in writing to Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE, CPA's Executive Director, faxed to (670) 234-5962 or emailed to **cpa.admin@pticom.com**. The Friday, February 27, 2009 meeting will be used to familiarize everyone on what needs to be done, what the PA system needs to be to meet both CPA and airline requirements. A scope of work will then be designed to form the basis for all proposals.

FOR THE COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY

/s/ Mr. Efrain F. Camacho, PE
Executive Director/Contracting Officer

Date: February 17, 2009

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

February 18, 1999

2 escaped convicts give up

Barely 24 hours since they bolted out of the Division of Corrections, Joseph Bowei and Ryan Babauta turned themselves in Tuesday night. Bowei was convicted of first-degree murder. Babauta, who twice escaped from prison, is serving time for involuntary manslaughter. Both were accompanied by family members. The six convicts, who are still on the loose, are Luis Camacho, William Sablan, Edwin Blas, Vicente Aldan Jr., Arcel Busto and Jeffrey Celis. Camacho was convicted for sexual abuse; Sablan for several counts of assault, battery and robbery; Blas for attempted rape; Aldan for second-degree murder; Busto for second-degree murder; and Celis for robbery, burglary and theft.

Young's team arrives today

US Rep. Don Young (R-Alaska), chairman of the House Resources Committee, along with 26 congressional members and spouses, arrives today on Saipan for a three-day visit considered crucial by CNMI in light of Washington's fresh plans to introduce a legislation on takeover of local minimum wage and immigration. Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio leads commonwealth officials who will welcome Young and participants to the committee's tour of the Pacific that already took them to American Samoa and Guam. The congressional members are to visit the Marshall Islands after Saipan Tenorio said he has high hopes the trip will persuade US lawmakers to go easy on a new proposal the White House plans to introduce to Congress for the application of federal immigration and minimum wage laws to the Northern Marianas.

February 18, 2000

$12 million now in rebate trust fund

All indications are pointing to the on-time release of tax rebate and refund checks this year with the government drawing near to fully replenishing the special rebate trust account, according to Finance Secretary Lucy Nielsen. Ms. Nielsen said the government has so far deposited at least $12 million in the special rebate trust account, which was almost empty when the administration of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio assumed office in January 1998. When the Teno Administration assumed office in January last year, the Transition Committee had uncovered that the special trust fund has dipped to $2 million when it should have been at $31 million as of end-1997.

CDA refutes OPA report on building renovation

Contrary to a preliminary report prepared by the Public Auditor, monthly rental at the building currently occupied by the Commonwealth Development Authority in Gualo Rai will be in status quo until 2007, Board Chair John S. Tenorio said yesterday. Mr. Tenorio was reacting on a report from OPA which claimed that renovation of the structure along Middle Road will eventually increase CDA's monthly rental of the property by $5,000 to $19,212 per month. Mr. Tenorio said CDA currently pays its lessor $1.25 per square-foot for the building and will continue to pay the same amount for the next seven years.

February 18, 2002

Garbage crisis looms

The Department of Public Works is bracing for a looming garbage crisis due to the unavailability of financial assurance that would warrant the issuance of a permit to operate the Marpi landfill. This, as ongoing work for the landfill remains limited to clearing operations as the contractors await the release of a revised federal permit concerning native birds inhabiting the project site. It follows that the Puerto Rico dumpsite, which is projected to be filled to maximum capacity before the year ends, may not be allowed closure, if a replacement landfill is not ready to accommodate Saipan's tons of garbage daily. (See related story on p.3) The concern was raised by the Division of Environmental Quality's Brian Bearden, an environmental engineer who administers the agency's Solid Waste Permitting Program.

Create new industry in NMI: Diego asks Chinese

To create a climate that will promote business growth in the CNMI, the Babauta administration will end the politics of confrontation with the United States, make the CNMI investor-friendly and implement a performance-based government. At the same time, Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente challenged members of the Chinese Association of Saipan, CNMI to use their ingenuity to create alternative industries in the Commonwealth, in the wake of the impending demise of the garment industry. Benavente is acting Governor as Gov. Juan N. Babauta is in Washington DC for a three-week visit.

Island Snapshots

COP CLEANUP

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Over 60 volunteers removed 1,180 lbs of garbage at Coral Ocean Point on Saturday, Feb. 7, 2009. Pacific Islands Club, Hopwood Junior High School's My Wave Club and Saipan Southern High School's Manta Ray Battalion joined the cleanup. Coral Ocean Point Golf Resort donated water.

PTA MEETING

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Members of the Dandan Elementary School PTA pose after a recent meeting. In the photo are PTA officers led by president Vince Torres, vice president Ed Arriola, secretary Martha Mendiola, treasurer Tess Camacho, DES principal Jonas Barcinas, DES students and parents. This year the PTA brought back the raffle drawing concept and for the past three months now, the school's PTA and school leaders have been seeing so much positive feedback and more parental participation during the monthly PTA meetings.

TINIAN'S PIKA FESTIVAL

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Brooke Nevitt, Outreach Coordinator for Coastal Resources Management Office, quizzes Tinian students about the islands' reefs. For every correct answer, each student received a calendar, pencil, sticker, or poster.

Primo, the CNMI's mascot for the Rare Pride Campaign, attended the Pika Festival held at Tachonga Beach, Tinian, on Saturday, Feb. 14 and Sunday, Feb. 15. Primo was able to speak to children of all ages about keeping CNMI reefs healthy for residents and tourists.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

SHIPPING SCHEDULE

MARIANA EXPRESS LINES PTE. LTD.

Outbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETD Jakarta	ETD Bangkok	ETD P. Kelang	ETD Melbourne	ETD Singapore	ETD Hochiminh	ETD Busan	ETD Kobe	ETD Shanghai	ETD Auckland	ETD Manila	ETD Hongkong	ETD Kaoshiung	ETD Naha
MELL SENOKO	017E	2/7 Sat	2/5 Thu	2/5 Thu	2/3 Tue	1/31 Sat	2/13 Fri	2/9 Mon	2/8 Sun	2/1 Sun	2/1 Sun	2/9 Mon	2/13 Fri	2/15 Sun	2/17 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	016E	2/14 Sat	2/12 Thu	2/12 Thu	2/10 Tue	2/7 Sat	2/20 Fri	2/16 Mon	2/15 Sun	2/8 Sun	2/8 Sun	2/16 Mon	2/20 Fri	2/22 Sun	2/24 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	030E	2/21 Sat	2/19 Thu	2/19 Thu	2/17 Tue	2/14 Sat	2/27 Fri	2/23 Mon	2/22 Sun	2/15 Sun	2/15 Sun	2/23 Mon	2/27 Fri	3/1 Sun	3/3 Tue
MELL SENOKO	018E	2/28 Sat	2/26 Thu	2/26 Thu	2/24 Tue	2/21 Sat	3/6 Fri	3/2 Mon	3/1 Sun	2/22 Sun	2/22 Sun	3/2 Mon	3/6 Fri	3/8 Sun	3/10 Tue
MELL SENTOSA	017E	3/7 Sat	3/5 Thu	3/5 Thu	3/3 Tue	2/28 Sat	3/13 Fri	3/9 Mon	3/8 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/9 Mon	3/13 Fri	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue
STADT HAMBURG	031E	3/14 Sat	3/12 Thu	3/12 Thu	3/10 Tue	3/7 Sat	3/20 Fri	3/16 Mon	3/15 Sun	3/8 Sun	3/8 Sun	3/16 Mon	3/20 Fri	3/22 Sun	3/24 Tue

Inbound from Asia	Voyage No.	ETA Guam	ETD Guam	ETA Saipan	ETA Yap	ETA Koror	ETA GenSan	ETA Davao	ETA Cebu	ETA Hongkong	ETA Kaoshiung	ETA Busan	ETA Yokohama	ETA Manila	ETA Singapore
MELL SENOKO	017E	2/21 Sat	2/22 Sun	2/22 Sun	SKIP	2/26 Thu	2/28 Sat	3/1 Sun	3/3 Tue	3/6 Fri	3/7 Sat	3/12 Thu	3/31 Tue	3/29 Sun	3/11 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	016E	2/28 Sat	3/1 Sun	3/1 Sun	3/3 Tue	3/5 Thu	3/7 Sat	3/8 Sun	3/10 Tue	3/13 Fri	3/14 Sat	3/19 Thu	4/7 Tue	4/5 Sun	3/18 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	030E	3/7 Sat	3/8 Sun	3/8 Sun	SKIP	3/12 Thu	3/14 Sat	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue	3/20 Fri	3/21 Sat	3/26 Thu	4/14 Tue	4/12 Sun	3/25 Wed
MELL SENOKO	018E	3/14 Sat	3/15 Sun	3/15 Sun	3/17 Tue	3/19 Thu	3/21 Sat	3/22 Sun	3/24 Tue	3/27 Fri	3/28 Sat	4/2 Thu	4/21 Tue	4/19 Sun	4/1 Wed
MELL SENTOSA	017E	3/21 Sat	3/22 Sun	3/22 Sun	SKIP	3/26 Thu	3/28 Sat	3/29 Sun	3/31 Tue	4/3 Fri	4/4 Sat	4/9 Thu	4/28 Tue	4/26 Sun	4/8 Wed
STADT HAMBURG	031E	3/28 Sat	3/29 Sun	3/29 Sun	3/31 Tue	4/2 Thu	4/4 Sat	4/5 Sun	4/7 Tue	4/10 Fri	4/11 Sat	4/16 Thu	5/5 Tue	5/3 Sun	4/15 Wed

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Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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EDITORIAL

Israel's step backward

Israel's election last week propelled the country back in time to a political era when the parliament was sharply divided between parties that favored or opposed a two-state settlement with Palestinians. As in the 1980s, the right has the upper hand: Likud party leader Benjamin Netanyahu appears to have the best chance to become prime minister, even though his party finished second behind the centrist Kadima. Americans who remember Mr. Netanyahu's last stint as prime minister in the 1990s—and there are several in the Obama administration who were working on Mideast policy then—have to be concerned that he would repeat his strategy of seeking to delay or undermine all peace negotiations with the Palestinians. He might also press for Israeli or American military action against Iran, and he has promised to "topple" and "uproot" Hamas from the Gaza Strip.

Mr. Netanyahu has said that he hopes to form a broad government including Kadima and possibly even the left-wing Labor party, which finished fourth behind an ultranationalist ticket. That would mimic the Israeli governments of the 1980s, which paralyzed the peace process but not the expansion of Jewish settlements in the West Bank. Kadima and Labor, which favor continued talks on a two-state deal with Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas, would be wise to stay out of a Netanyahu-led government.

Having promised more active diplomacy in the Middle East, the Obama administration will have to grapple with how to advance its aims despite what could be fundamental disagreements with Israel's new leaders. One way to do so is to push for the conclusion by the outgoing Israeli government of a cease-fire with Hamas. Egypt was reported last week to be close to brokering a deal that would promise an 18-month halt in hostilities, the freeing of a captive Israeli soldier as well as hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, and the opening of Gaza border crossings. Such a deal could forestall the renewed military attack on Gaza that Mr. Netanyahu has been hinting at. It might also lead to an agreement between Hamas and Mr. Abbas that would restore a single Palestinian government.

The largest obstacle to these deals lies not in Israel but in Syria, where the hard-line leadership of Hamas is based. President Obama has promised a restored U.S. dialogue with Syria; a request for cooperation on Hamas would be a useful opening test of Damascus' intentions. The administration may also be able to cooperate with the new Israeli government on improving the economy and security forces of the Palestinian Authority in the West Bank.

At the same time, the Obama administration should not adopt the Bush administration's practice of accepting Israeli positions as givens. Whether or not the new government favors negotiations on a Palestinian state, Mr. Obama should challenge it to continue the process started by outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and Mr. Abbas. If Israel does not comply with its own commitments to dismantle illegal West Bank settlements, the administration should hold it accountable. Neither Israel nor the United States can afford another government that obstructs a Middle East peace.

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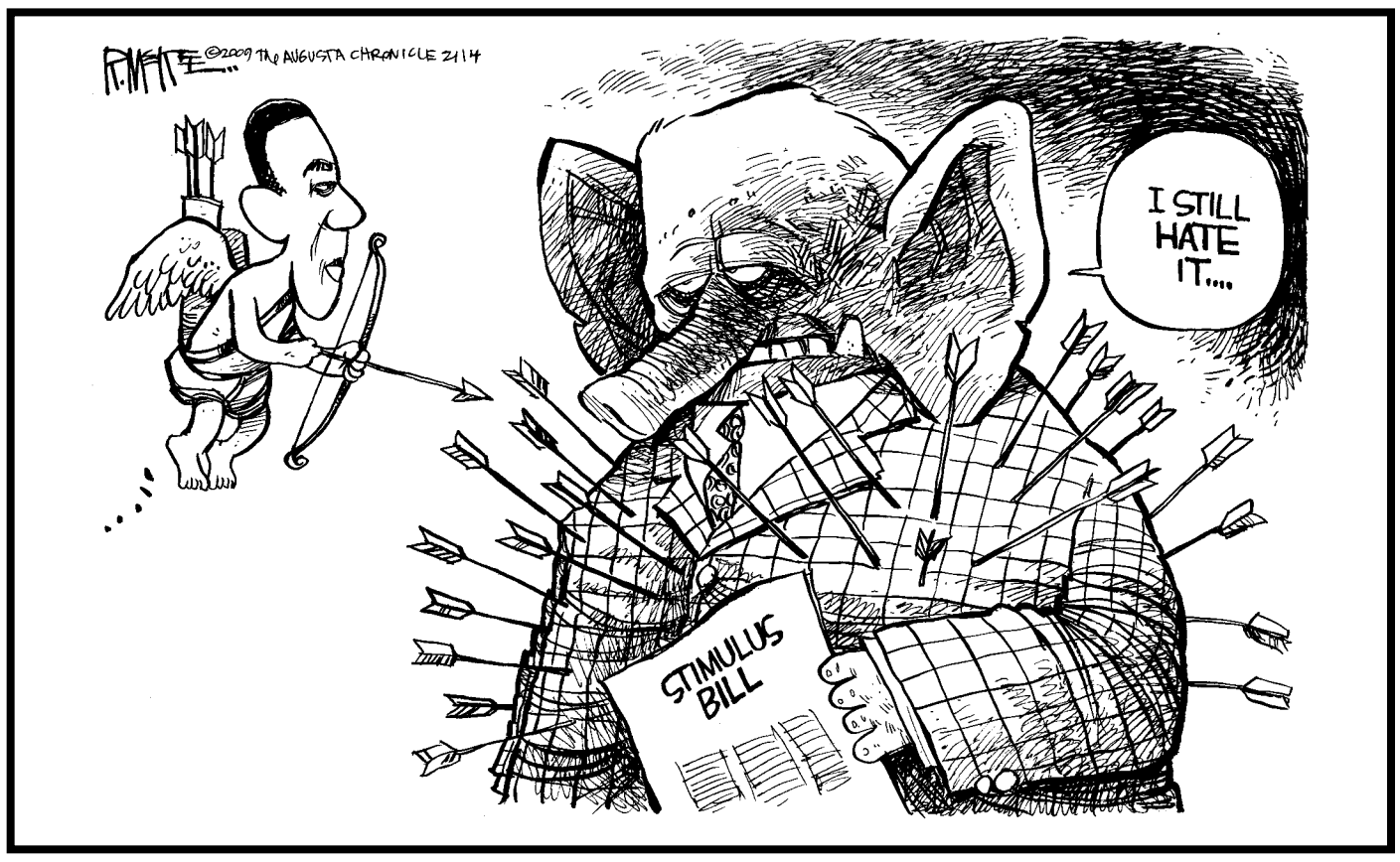


SaveSaipan.com!

How Facebook might just save Saipan

The only way to take control of your life, raise your standard of living and movebeyond merely surviving is to create your own unique product or service that you offer to increasing numbers of people in exchange for the things of value that you desire. This simple formula applies to countries as well as people. A self-sufficient economy has its own products or services of value to export to the world. Similarly, a self-sufficient individual has something of value to exchange in the global marketplace. That thing of value is based on your natural talent, skill, or interest—in other words, your passion!

THE SAIPANPRENEUR PROJECT *Creating economic success for the CNMI*

By WALT F.J. GOODRIDGE
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Send article suggestions, entrepreneur nominations and feedback about this article to walt@passionprofit.com.

For those of you who might be new to issues concerning Saipan, here is an overview: The previous U.S. administration put into motion certain regulations which will affect the immigration, tourism, and hence the economy of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. In particular, much attention is being focused on one set of regulations titled *Establishing U.S. Ports of Entry in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) and Implementing the Guam-CNMI Visa Waiver Program.*

Of particular concern to those who understand the significance of tourism as well as the presence of guest workers to Saipan's economic survival is the elimination of Chinese and Russian tourists' easy access to vacationing on Saipan. Visas for travelers from these and other countries are no longer "waived." They will now have to go through a (some say costly, lengthy, and thus prohibitive) visa application process in order to travel to Saipan. Also affected by the federalization of Saipan's immigration and labor situation are contract workers and their ability to enter or return to Saipan, "immediate relatives" of local residents and American citizens who will now be required to meet new criteria in order to stay on the island, and students and those who might come to Saipan for education and language learning opportunities. Overall, much attention, focus, fear and concern is being aimed at this significant piece of legislation, its June 1, 2009, implementation, its expected effects, and what can be done about it all.

People have started to respond. Letters are being written to the Department of Homeland Security, Office of International Trade, whitehouse.gov, regulations.gov and dhs.gov (see footnote). Blogs are posting these letters for others to see (unheardnomore.blogspot.com, saipanchallenges.blogspot.com). Officials are petitioning the powers in Washington to revisit and revise. So, what else can we do?

I have an idea. Let's start a Saipan fan page on Facebook! So, how exactly can a Facebook fan page save Saipan you ask? There are four powerful concepts that, if harnessed correctly, just might work.

Powerful Concept 1: The Elements of Change

According to Mike Lux, who just published a book titled *The Progressive Revolution: How the Best in America Came to Be*, there are three things you need to have in place to make the kind of historic changes that have reshaped our country (i.e. the Civil War, or the progressive movement, or the New Deal or the Great Society, or the Civil Rights movement). One, you need a crisis. Two, you need a leader who is open to change, And three, you need a movement.

Let's see if we here on Saipan have what's needed to make change, according to Mr. Lux.

A crisis? The imminent demise of Saipan's economy.

A leader who is open to change? President Obama.

A movement? Now, that's where Facebook comes in. To understand the power of Facebook, we need to explore the next two powerful concepts.

Powerful Concept 2: The Power of Distribution

The best way to sell a lot of something is to have a good distribution system in place. When country singer Garth Brooks released his CD titled *Collection* in 1994, he sold three million copies (that's triple platinum) in three weeks! How did his record label do it? Their secret was to make the CD available only in McDonald's restaurants. The marketers at EMI recognized that McDonald's 9,500 restaurants strategically placed around the country was a distribution channel like no other.

Social networks like Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, et. al., are a distribution channel of people who are always communicating with each other. The basic premise of a human distribution channel is that when a lot of people do just a little bit, a lot can get done. What we want done is for people to spread the word about "saving Saipan." That act of communicating brings to our discussion, the next powerful concept.

Powerful Concept 3: Word-of-mouth is the most powerful form of marketing

Network marketing companies like Amway, ACN, Marykay have proven that word-of-mouth marketing is powerful. It's also called relationship marketing. People will listen to their friends and family—people with whom they already have trusting relationships—for advice, information and even what to purchase. The power of Facebook lies in its word-of-mouth marketing with the trust factor built in to get ideas across to the greatest numbers of people, and move them to action in ways that no corporate advertising campaign can. People trust

See SAVESAIPAN.COM on Next Page

EDITORIAL POLICY The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, Century Insurance Building, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

LAND OWNERSHIP CONTROL STIFLES GROWTH, DEV'T

A suggested compromise to help resolve our economic predicament

By JOSE S. DELA CRUZ
SPECIAL TO THE SAIPAN TRIBUNE

Last of a six-part series

If the Northern Mariana Islands were rich in terms of natural resources, like oil-rich Saudi Arabia, we don't have to worry about the economy and we don't need investors. Indeed, we will be the ones investing in other places. But we are not Saudi Arabia, and we don't have any natural resource to rely on except the revenue that we generate from the visitor industry and the leases of lands to businesses and outside investors, mostly foreign investors.

The major problem we are now encountering is that investors are no longer coming here to invest. Why? We really do not know exactly what the reason is; but we could ask ourselves several questions to figure out the likely reasons. Is the problem the way we enact and amend our laws frequently? Is the problem the fact that our land laws are very restrictive for investors? Is the problem the fact that our government puts up so much hurdle for investors to overcome? Is the problem the mixed signals that we give investors by saying one thing and doing just the opposite? Is the problem "the perception" by potential investors that the business climate in the CNMI is not investor-friendly?

If the answer to all of those questions is "yes," then the CNMI has a lot of work to do to change our image with investors. One way of doing this is to do something concrete immediately to show investors that we will in fact hereafter do things differently. For example, we might want to begin anew the CNMI economic development process by making the existing restriction on land alienation more investor friendly. The CNMI should consider amending Article 12 of the NMI Constitution so as to allow non-NMD U.S. citizens to own land in the CNMI and non-U.S. citizen investors to own or lease out privately-owned lands for, say, 99-years. Investors could be defined as qualifying for land ownership if they are investing a certain amount of money in the CNMI, say, at least $1 million. For real estate developments, for example, such as housing development for the so-called "silver market," the housing developer should be allowed to own the land in fee simple. The same arrangement could be given to investors who are building hotels, shopping malls, golf courses, and other major real estate developments.

There is no question that we need to review our land alienation laws and liberalize it because our economy is not moving at all and the only thing of value that we could offer to investors is land. There is no question that the CNMI land alienation restriction is the major critical problem that is affecting the CNMI economy and its growth and development. This fundamental economic issue, therefore, has to be re-assessed by the people of the CNMI and its leaders.

In addressing the critical issue of land ownership, we should also address the concerns raised by the pro-Article 12 group: namely, landowners would be tempted to sell all their land and eventually become landless. The issue of landlessness is clearly a valid public policy concern. But the possibility of an indigenous landowner becoming landless could still occur under Article 12 as it now exists; landowners could always sell all their land to buyers of NMI descent, without any restriction. The Article 12 restriction is only against buyers who are not of NMI descent.

If the concern of those in favor retaining Article 12 is to make sure that persons of NMI descent do not become landless, Article 12 does not address such concern entirely. Under Article 12 now, an NMI descent buyer could buy all the land of an NMI descent seller, and the landowner would still end up being landless. The problem of potential landlessness for persons of NMI descent has to be addressed separately. It may be that there is really no legal solution to this problem, because the matter of selling your land is a strictly personal matter that ultimately rests with the landowner himself.

Having said all of the foregoing, the CNMI is still faced with getting out of its present economic predicament, one that affects all of the people of the Commonwealth, both those of NMI descent and those who are not. Unless we fix our economic problem, many of our people may end up leaving the Commonwealth and the very land they do not wish to part with. Obviously, no one wants this to happen.

Making critical public policy decisions under difficult and trying circumstances takes a lot of guts. We all know that. The decision-maker fears that the decision he makes might end up being wrong. Fear, in difficult and trying situations, is either a powerful deterrent or highly motivating factor. For example, the fear that the CNMI economy might go "belly-up" is causing panic and uncertainty within the business sector, as well as the CNMI government and the general population. The cry to "abandon ship" has not yet come up, but if the CNMI government could no longer provide essential public services such as public education, public safety, and public health, then the CNMI would be in one big mess. And as we are all too painfully aware, we appear to be headed in that direction. We, therefore, have to take bold and decisive action immediately to improve our economy.

See A SUGGESTED on Page 13

Letter to the Editor

Debate on indigenous land

The land alienation provision of the Covenant agreement was presented at the outset of the negotiations in 1972. The U.S. Justice Department representative related that such provision, if race-based, could be problematic. But the initial intent by the Marianas contingent was to prevent the loss of land to huge U.S. corporations.

This never happened. Instead, it was Japanese investors who used World War II reconstruction funds to invest here and elsewhere in the global village. The fear then was justified: the protection of the innocent from the more sophisticated people from across the Pacific Divide. This view never materialized given the distance it takes to ship manufactured goods from the CNMI. U.S. conglomerates could easily go down south of the border for both inexpensive shipping and labor. It's happening today.

It's important to understand—before any discussion is held publicly—that land has been, still is, and will continue to be a highly controversial issue. Even more important is the question of the protection of indigenous land. This matter solely rests with the landowner. And this an issue that I wish to make abundantly clear: I will consistently fight for indigenous land rights for as long as it is understood and subsequently decided with finality that landownership must be granted, full square, to landowners. In brief, disposition of land is solely the right of landowners—no more, no less.

Let landowners take 100 percent ownership of their land. No one has any right to constantly be given *veto power* over another person's property. People have matured and more than capable to make final disposition of their land. I liken this issue to a cigarette lighter. It is mine and I alone can decide whether to loan it and set conditions on how it is used, break it in half or keep it, *no more, no less*.

Equally troubling is the notion of keeping indigenous land in the hands of Chamorros and Carolinians. This sentiment may have merit if in fact there's a strong movement at the grassroots level for island nation building. Only our future scholars can decide on this matter. With education fully set under their belt, this is a matter they can revisit to reset the goals of posterity. The protectionist attitude on this issue isn't going to help anybody other than the superficial attainment of "feel good" accolades for successfully using the rhetoric of fear to continue suppressing the rights of others to fully own their land.

With respect to public land, it's important that we revisit their use in a place where there's scarcity of this property. Do we continue leasing public land to bring in new investments and revenue sources? Do we stop right here and now and intone, "Make the world go away?" or shouldn't we meet and agree on the concept of private/public/partnership in the development of public land into win-win situation?

Finally, the disposition of my property solely rests with me. About the only land that will matter—at the end of the day—is the 4x6x6 where my tired body will rest peacefully, eternally. This is the only property that will matter to me. I need not die like Howard Hughes who expired with VD, an emaciated body and fingernails longer than Dracula's. Let me rest peacefully under the blue skies of paradise knowing I have full ownership to my land. Have a nice day!

John S. DelRosario Jr.
As Gonno, Saipan

SAVESAIPAN.COM

From Page 10

and listen to their friends.

So, can "Save Saipan!" create a movement? Facebook—and other similar sites—are movements of sorts.

Everyone who is on Facebook and who chooses to become a fan of "The Island and Tourist Destination of Saipan, CNMI" as part of the "Save Saipan!" Campaign is part of a movement, has their own social network of friends and family—a built-in distribution channel, and can use word-of-mouth (or, more aptly, word-of-mouse!) to spread the word about Saipan and our desire to "save" it!

Movements are about numbers of people thinking specific thoughts, taking specific actions, acting in unison toward specific goals. And speaking of goals, we intend to harness the fourth and final Powerful Concept to help us achieve ours.

Powerful Concept 4: Peer Pressure

Our goals for the "Save Saipan!" Facebook Fan Page are simple:

1. To increase worldwide awareness of what's happening here by creating a media-friendly, human interest, representation of the issue. (Who doesn't love Facebook? Who wouldn't be moved by the story of the forced separation of families who've spent their lives here on Saipan? Who can ignore a million fans for a tiny unknown island in the Pacific?) This results in "pressure" from America's global "peers" to address the issue.

2. And this is very important. Another secret outcome of this campaign is simply to increase the world's awareness of the fact that we exist! As those of us who live here know, even most of our countrymen in America don't know about Saipan, Tinian, Rota and the rest of the Commonwealth. We are the forgotten piece of America in the Pacific. In that way, regardless of the outcome of the visa waiver issue, and whatever your views for or against the visa waiver issue, federalization, immigration, by having a million fans of our page, we might be able to spark interest and tourism to our islands! See? It's a win-win however you slice it! So tell everyone you know to become a fan of Saipan! Visit the www.savesaipan.org fan page, start a discussion, post videos, photos, etc. and create a welcoming, public place for people to meet, and for others to see!

What You Can Do

1. Visit www.savesaipan.org, click on "Become a fan" which will take you to the Facebook page, then click on "become a Facebook fan."

2. Send an e-mail to your list of Facebook/MySpace/etc. friends encouraging them also to become fans of Saipan!

3. Post to your blog and/or link to www.savesaipan.org

Note: the site is accessible through savesaipan.com as well as savesaipan.org.

REMEMBER: President Barack Obama himself used social networks to wage a presidential campaign unlike any other in history. Do you think there just might be some potential here? You decide.

■ ■ ■

Visa Waiver Comments:

Do you have a concern about the pending Visa Waiver law? Make your voice heard! Please note that public comments must be submitted by March 17, 2009. You must reference Docket *#: USCBP-2009-0001 in your letters.* Send letters to:

Border Security Regulations
Branch, Office of International Trade,
Customs and Border Protection, Mint Annex,
799 9th Street, NW.,
Washington, DC 20001.

Also, submit your comments and concerns online at www.change.gov, www.whitehouse.gov, www.regulations.gov, and www. dhs.gov. The more the better.

***Note**: For more tips on overcoming your fears, acting on your ideas, changing the game, and creating a passion-centered lifestyle, visit www.passionprofit.com!*

■ ■ ■

Until next week, remember, success is a journey, not a destination!

Walt F.J. Goodridge is author of 12 books including Turn Your Passion Into Profit. Walt offers coaching and workshops to help people pursue and profit from their passions. Originally from the island of Jamaica, Walt has grown several successful businesses in the US, and now makes his home here in Saipan. To learn more about the Saipanpreneur Project and Walt's philosophy and formula visit www.saipanpreneur.com and www.passionprofit.com.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.	Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
▲88° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°	▲87° ▼77°

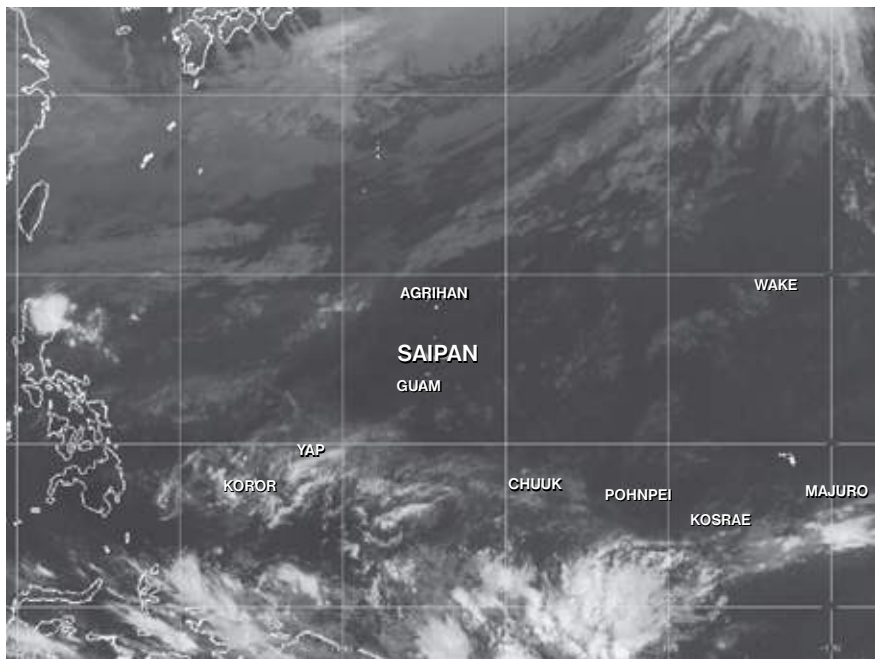
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲84	▼75
Palau	Showers	▲86	▼77
Yap	Showers	▲88	▼76
Chuuk	Showers	▲88	▼78
Pohnpei	Showers	▲86	▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲88	▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲85	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲74	▼66
Beijing	Snow	▲36	▼27
Hong Kong	Showers	▲72	▼66
Honolulu	Showers	▲75	▼68
London	Cloudy	▲48	▼39
Los Angeles	Mostly Sunny	▲66	▼48
Manila	Showers	▲86	▼75
Melbourne	Sunny	▲84	▼63
Miami	Mostly Sunny	▲77	▼65
New York	Rain/Snow	▲43	▼36
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲45	▼35
Paris	Showers	▲47	▼39
Pusan	Cloudy	▲49	▼38
Rome	Cloudy	▲42	▼29
Salem	Partly Sunny	▲51	▼32
San Francisco	Partly Sunny	▲58	▼47
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲37	▼25
Tokyo	Partly Sunny	▲48	▼33
Washington, DC	Rain	▲46	▼38

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, TUESDAY, FEB. 17, 2009
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A stationary front extends west-southwest from 25N152E to 21N143E then as a shear line to beyond 130E at 18N. Isolated showers are located along this boundary. The near-equatorial trough extends from 2N130E to EQ144E. Convergent winds near the trough axis are generating scattered showers along the equator between 130E and 139E. Upper level divergence is enhancing deep convection along the equator between 147E and 158E. Trade-wind convergence is triggering scattered showers south of Kosrae and Majuro within 125 miles of a line extending from 2N162E to 7N180.

Tides

Saipan Harbor		
4:29 AM Today	High Tide:	1.4 Feet
8:00 AM Today	Low Tide:	1.3 Feet
1:04 PM Today	High Tide:	1.7 Feet
9:30 PM Today	Low Tide:	0.2 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:40 AM	6:22 PM
Thursday	6:40 AM	6:22 PM
Friday	6:39 AM	6:22 PM
Saturday	6:39 AM	6:23 PM
Sunday	6:38 AM	6:23 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	1:15 AM	12:35 PM
Thursday	2:07 AM	1:26 PM
Friday	2:57 AM	2:18 PM
Saturday	3:45 AM	3:10 PM
Sunday	4:29 AM	4:02 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, CIC Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

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ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 1, 2009

DEPARTURES

Saipan-Rota			
CO9597	11:50am	12:25pm	1,7
Saipan-Guam			
CO9317	5:00am	5:50am	Daily
CO9313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
CO9597	11:50am	1:20pm	1,7 via Rota
CO9601	12:30pm	1:20pm	2,3,4,5,6
CO9603	3:30pm	4:20pm	Daily
CO9605	6:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
CO9599	9:30pm	10:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Narita			
NW 099	5:00am	7:35am	Daily
NW 078	8:20am	1:30pm	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 075	4:55pm	7:30pm	Daily
Guam-Narita			
NW 73	4:10pm	7:00pm	Daily
NW 81	3:55pm	6:55pm	Daily
Saipan-Osaka			
OZ 119	4:00am	6:40am	1,4,6
NW 083	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Guam-Osaka			
NW 79	4:45pm	7:35pm	Daily
Saipan-Nagoya			
NW 078	8:20am	11:05am	Daily
Guam-Nagoya			
NW 23	4:30pm	7:20pm	Daily
Saipan-Incheon			
OZ 604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ 604	2:40am	6:30am	2,3,4,5,6,7
OZ 119	4:00am	11:25am	1,4,6 via Osaka
OZ 606	3:20pm	7:00pm	Daily
Saipan-Busan			
OZ 608	3:20am	6:50am	1,4,5,7
Saipan-Shanghai			
FM 844	2:50am	5:40am	2,6
Rota-Guam			
CO 9597	12:50pm	1:20pm	1,7
Guam-Palau			
CO 953	7:40pm	8:40pm	1,7
CO 893	5:50pm	6:50pm	3,5
Palau-Manila			
CO 893	7:35pm	9:10pm	3,5
Guam-Manila			
CO 893	5:50pm	9:10pm	3,5 via Koror
CO 933	8:00pm	9:40pm	Daily
PR 111	6:00am	7:50am	1,2,4,6,7
Nagoya-Manila			
NW 71	8:40pm	11:55pm	Daily
Incheon-Hongkong			
OZ 721	9:20am	12:00pm	Daily
OZ 723	7:45pm	10:35pm	Daily
OZ 7173	8:00pm	10:50pm	5,7
Narita-Manila			
NW 1	7:00pm	10:55pm	Daily

ARRIVALS

Rota-Saipan			
CO 9598	3:25am	4:00am	5,6
Guam-Saipan			
CO 9316	2:30am	3:20am	1,2,3,4,7
CO9598	2:30am	4:00am	5,6 via Rota
CO9596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
CO9600	10:20am	11:10am	Daily
CO9602	2:00pm	2:50pm	Daily
CO9604	5:00pm	5:50pm	Daily
CO9606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily
Narita-Saipan			
NW 076	10:15am	2:40pm	Daily
NW 077	6:25pm	1:20am+1	2,3,4,5,6,7
NW 100	8:45pm	1:10am+1	Daily
Narita-Guam			
NW 74	9:45am	2:20pm	Daily
NW 82	10:30am	3:10pm	Daily
Osaka-Saipan			
OZ 120	9:50pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7
NW 084	10:40am	3:05pm	Daily
Osaka-Guam			
NW 80	10:30am	3:00pm	Daily
Nagoya-Saipan			
NW 077	9:00pm	1:20am+1	Daily
Nagoya-Guam			
NW 24	10:00am	2:30pm	Daily
Incheon-Saipan			
OZ 605	9:00am	2:20pm	Daily
OZ 603	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ 120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	3,5,7 via Osaka
OZ 603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1,2,3,4,5,6
Busan-Saipan			
OZ 607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7
Shanghai-Saipan			
FM 843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1,5
Guam-Rota			
CO 9598	2:30am	3:00am	5,6
Palau-Guam			
CO 954	2:30am	5:25am	1,2
CO 892	2:35am	5:30am	4,6
Manila-Palau			
CO 892	10:10pm	1:50am+1	3,5
Manila-Guam			
CO 892	10:10pm	5:30am+1	3,5 via Koror
CO 934	11:10pm	4:40am+1	Daily
PR 110	10:10pm	4:00am+1	1,3,5,6,7
Manila-Nagoya			
NW 72	6:30am	11:05am	Daily
Hongkong-Incheon			
OZ 724	12:30am	4:50am	Daily
OZ 7183	12:45am	5:05am	1,4,6
OZ 722	1:30pm	5:45pm	Daily
Manila-Narita			
NW 2	7:45am	12:40pm	Daily

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Business

STOCK Portfolio

ASIAN MARKETS

	AUSTRALIA 3,412,200 Down 49.100 (-1.42%)		
HONG KONG 13,058.72 Down 397.16 (-2.95%)		JAKARTA 1,321.375 Down 20.627 (-1.54%)	
TOKYO 7,645.51 Down 104.66 (-1.35%)		K. LUMPUR 894.60 Down 2.47 (-0.28%)	
MANILA 1,899.90 Down 15.89 (-0.83%)		SINGAPORE 1,656.36 Down 24.34 (-1.45%)	
SEOUL 1,127.19 Down 48.98 (-4.11%)		BANGKOK 440.66 Down 5.98 (-1.34%)	

LEADING INDICATORS

DOW
7,850.41
0.00

NASDAQ
1,534.36
-7.35

S&P
826.84
-8.35

MONEY MARKET

Australian Dollar	1.5581
British Pound	0.7039
Canadian Dollar	1.2502
Chinese Renminbi	6.8359
Euro	0.7910
Hong Kong Dollar	7.7544
Indian Rupee	49.1150
Indonesian Rupiah	12,030.0000
Japanese Yen	92.4950
Malaysian Ringgit	3.6370
New Zealand Dollar	1.8716
Philippine Peso	47.7670
Singapore Dollar	1.5258
South Korean Won	1,455.6000
Swiss Franc	1.1743
Taiwan Dollar	34.4250
Thailand Baht	35.2650

In U.S. dollar terms

Source: Associated Press

TV stations get ready to cut analog signal

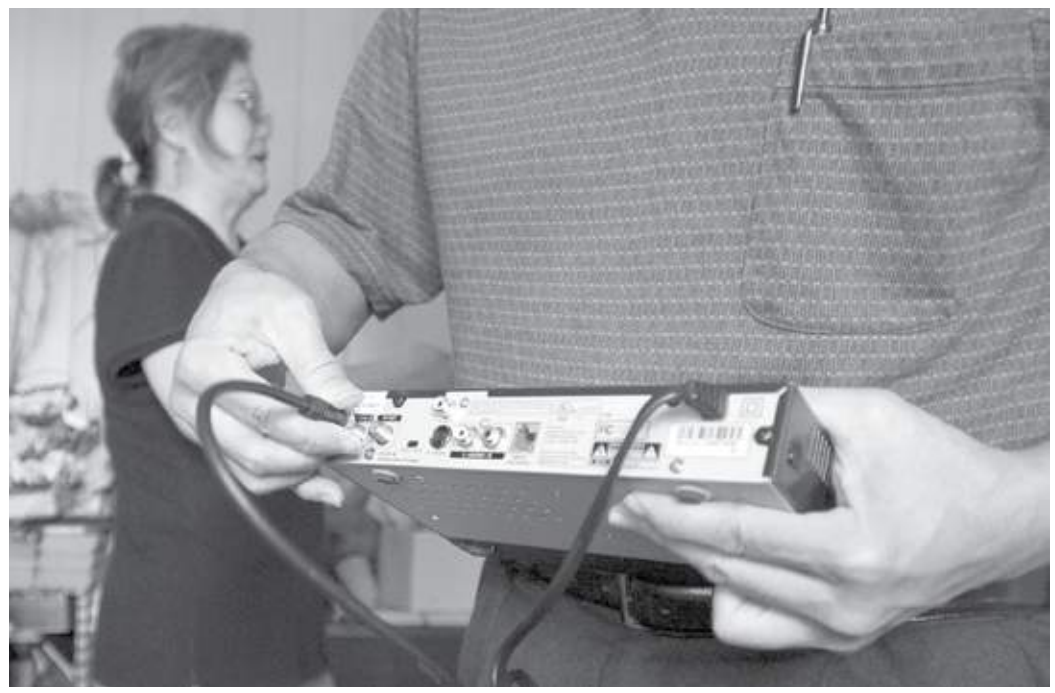
NEW YORK (AP)—In theater superstition, a bad dress rehearsal is supposed to foretell a good opening night.

If so, the U.S. might be in good shape when it turns off the last analog TV broadcasts in June, because the lead-up to the smaller-scale turnoff on Tuesday has been confusing to both viewers and TV stations.

For years, the government and industry has said Feb. 17 would be the day when analog TV signals go away, and viewers who lack cable or satellite would have to tune in to digital signals. But when funding ran out for coupons to subsidize TV converter boxes, Congress became concerned that viewers wouldn't be ready, and hurriedly passed a bill to delay the deadline to June 12.

At the same time, Congress left the door open to stations to keep the Feb. 17 date. When a third of U.S. full-power stations said they'd like to do so, the Federal Communications Commission put its foot down, placing extra conditions on some of them. Only late Friday did it become clear, or nearly so, which stations would shut down analog four days later, and which would wait for a few more months.

A patchwork of 641 stations across the country, mainly in thinly populated areas, are still turning off their analog broadcasts this week or have already done so. The most populous markets where many or all major-network stations are cutting analog include San Diego and Santa Barbara, Calif.; Providence, R.I.; La Crosse and Madison, Wis.; Rockford, Ill.; Sioux City, Iowa; Waco, Texas; Macon, Ga.; Scranton, Pa.; and Burlington, Vt.



AP

In a Tuesday, Jan. 13, 2009 file photo, Earl Mostoles, right, helps Arlene Sato to set up her digital receiver for her old analog television, in Honolulu.

Government pension agency braces for recession

WASHINGTON (AP)—The deepening recession spells trouble for a little-known government corporation that insures the pensions of 44 million workers and retirees.

The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corp. already has an $11 billion deficit that seems sure to grow larger as Corporate America suffers through the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

With companies reporting shortfalls in their pension funds, it's all but certain that the PBGC will be forced to take over the pension plans of a rising number of bankrupt businesses.

That means more red ink at the corporation before things possibly can improve.

The future financial health of the agency is hard to forecast. It is hinged on interest rates, the length of the recession and the PBGC's own luck in playing the market, where it has billions invested.

The agency has $63 billion in assets. But it is obligated to spend $74 billion on pension benefits in the coming years. The PBGC might have time to rebound, but over the long term it might become insolvent and require a bailout.

"Someday—probably more than 20 years from now—there's a significant chance that somebody is going to have to pay the piper," said former PBGC Director Charles E.F. Millard, a Bush administration appointee who stepped down on Jan. 20 when Barack Obama became president. "In the near- to medium-term, there will be no need for a bailout of PBGC."

The PBGC quietly operates in a brick office building a few blocks from the White House. Its fate is important to the workers covered by the more than 29,000 employer-sponsored benefit pension plans it insures, and to all taxpayers who could be asked to foot the bill if its financial picture worsens down the road.

Citigroup's Mexico bank head denies sale reports

MEXICO CITY (AP)—The head of Citigroup's Mexican bank on Monday denied reports that the troubled U.S. institution plans to sell Banamex to streamline operations and pare losses at home.

Banco Nacional de Mexico, known as Banamex, is part of Citigroup Inc.'s "strategic plan" for the future and will maintain lending levels despite Mexico's slowing economy, CEO Enrique Zorrilla told reporters.

"We're in the most important emerging market for the U.S. and (Citigroup) has mentioned Banamex as the example to be followed in other countries," Zorrilla said.

Banamex's net profit dropped 28 percent to 13 billion pesos ($949 million) in 2008, he said, as rising unemployment and cooling growth boosted losses on loans.

Some 6.7 billion pesos ($486 million), or 7 percent, of consumer credit card loans were overdue at year's end, compared with 2.9 percent of total loans, Zorrilla said.

BUSINESS BRIEFS

Oil steady amid OPEC talk of more output cuts

SINGAPORE (AP)—Oil prices stayed above $37 a barrel Monday in Asia as OPEC members talked up more production cuts over the weekend amid weakening global demand for crude. Light, sweet crude for March delivery fell 5 cents to $37.46 a barrel by late afternoon in Singapore on the New York Mercantile Exchange. The contract rose $3.53 on Friday to settle at $37.51. The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries has implemented most of the 4.2 million barrels a day of output reductions announced since September, but the cuts have been overwhelmed by a collapse in crude demand amid the global slowdown.

Nearly 800 jobs axed at Delphi's steering division

BUENA VISTA TOWNSHIP, Mich. (AP)—Nearly 800 jobs are being eliminated at the steering division of Delphi Corp. near Saginaw, Mich. The cuts announced Monday are hitting 425 hourly workers and 350 employees who are on salary at the Delphi complex in Buena Vista Township. They will kick in March 1. "We've anticipated this for some time," said Mike Hanley, president of United Auto Workers Local 699. Delphi has had temporary furloughs since the start of the year, he told The Saginaw News. Blue-collar workers who volunteer to leave will get a severance. Workers with low seniority can leave and get a severance or put their name on a recall list. The white-collar layoffs are in all departments, including engineering, purchasing, manufacturing and sales. Before the cuts, Delphi's steering division had 3,600 employees.

L'Oreal 2008 net profit falls 27 percent

PARIS (AP)—French cosmetics maker L'Oreal said Monday that annual net profit fell 27 percent after disappointing American holiday sales, although the figures from a year earlier were boosted by a one-off gain. The maker of Maybelline mascara and Lancome fragrances posted a net profit of euro1.95 billion ($2.49 billion), weighed down by euro115 million of special charges. The results compared to euro2.66 billion in 2007, when L'Oreal made a euro617 gain on the sale of shares in Sanofi-Aventis. Excluding non-recurrent items, net profit rose to euro2.06 billion from euro2.04 billion in 2007. The company did not break out quarterly or half-yearly profit figures.

A SUGGESTED

From Page 11

The time for action is now. We need to explore all the avenues that we should take to try and turn our economy around. Right now there are three things that we could and must consider doing. First, the CNMI government needs to arrange for more air carriers to service the Japan-to-CNMI route. This is a must if the tourist industry, which is now our only industry, is to survive. A key reason for the decline in visitors to the CNMI has been identified previously; and it is the lack of adequate air service, primarily from Japan. This is the major problem of the CNMI visitor industry. How we go about attracting other air carriers is for the CNMI government and the business community to immediately figure out. But adequate air service to and from the CNMI is a must for the CNMI visitor industry.

Second, the CNMI government must immediately take action to amend and liberalize Article 12 so that we could attract new businesses and foreign investors to invest in the CNMI. This would involve an amendment to or the repeal of Article 12: to provide for either a fee simple ownership interest or a 99-year leasehold interest that investors and businesses who are not of NMI descent could acquire.

Third, the CNMI government's indifferent attitude toward businesses and investors has to change. The new attitude must be friendly, helpful and accommodating. Every now and then government leaders make it quite obvious that it goes out of its way to accommodate only some investors, but not others. This is not good, of course, and should stop. Every legitimate investor should be treated fairly and decently. The CNMI investment climate has to be friendly, helpful and accommodating. Investors should never be made to feel that they are not wanted in the CNMI.

If we immediately implement these three suggestions for starters, I firmly believe that the economy of the CNMI would begin to turn around. The two sides on the Article 12 issue would have to stop fighting each other. There is too much at stake for the Commonwealth right now; and we simply cannot afford to continue being divisive and antagonistic towards each other.

Jose S. Dela Cruz is a former justice in the CNMI Supreme Court.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Storm dumps rain, snow on California, closing I-5

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A winter storm blanketed California with heavy rain and snow on Monday, forcing the closure of a major highway and the cancellation of the final round of a national golf tournament. The storm stretched from the Mexican border up to Oregon and Washington and was expected to last through Tuesday afternoon, said Stan Wasowski, a forecaster for the National Weather Service in San Diego. He said rain clouds extended several hundred miles off the Pacific coast. "This one here is hitting the entire state," Wasowski said. Heavy snow forced the closure of a 50-mile stretch of Interstate 5 in both directions in the mountains north of Los Angeles. The roadway is the region's main north-south artery. "We don't see it opening any time soon," said David Porter, a California Highway Patrol officer. In Northern California, a flood advisory was issued for the San Francisco Bay area and a flash flood watch was in effect for much of California's central coast, where flooded greens forced the cancellation of the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am's final round.

Police in Conn. shoot chimp after it attacks woman

HARTFORD, Conn. (AP)—A 200-pound chimpanzee kept as a pet and once used in commercials was shot and killed by police Monday after it mauled a woman visiting its owner and later cornered an officer in his cruiser, authorities said. Stamford police Lt. Richard Conklin said the injured woman was hospitalized late Monday in "very serious" condition at Stamford Hospital; her identity was not immediately released. Conklin said she suffered "a tremendous loss of blood" from serious facial injuries. The 15-year-old chimpanzee's owner and two officers also were hurt, though police said the extent of their injuries was not immediately known. Police said they had no idea why the chimpanzee, named Travis, attacked the woman as she got out of her car to visit the animal's owner, Sandra Herold. Conklin said Herold wrestled with the animal, then ran inside to call 911.

Authorities scale back search for missing Fla. girl

SATSUMA, Fla. (AP)—Authorities in north Florida have scaled back their search for a missing 5-year-old girl who vanished from her home last week and a volunteer search group has ended its efforts. Putnam County Sheriff's officials said they sent about 50 officers Monday to an area that had not previously been searched after receiving a tip on Haleigh Cummings' disappearance, but nothing was found. The agency has since scaled back its search. Meanwhile, volunteer group Texas EquuSearch has suspended its efforts to find the little girl who disappeared early Tuesday. Haleigh's parents are divorced. She was being watched by her father's 17-year-old girlfriend, Misty Croslin, when she vanished from his home. Authorities are treating Haleigh's disappearance as an abduction.

Found parts could reveal what went wrong in crash

AP

Workers remove debris at the scene of a plane crash site of Continental Connection Flight 3407 in Clarence Center, N.Y., Monday, Feb. 16, 2009.

CLARENCE, N.Y. (AP)—Investigators have located key components that might help reveal what the pilot did to try to save Flight 3407 during its final desperate seconds, when the plane plunged to the ground so suddenly that sending a mayday was impossible, an investigator said Monday.

After a seemingly routine flight, the airplane endured a 26-second plunge before smashing into a house in icy weather about six miles from Buffalo Niagara International Airport on Thursday night, killing 49 people on the plane and one on the ground.

On Monday, families of the victims visited the site for the first time and placed roses to remember the dead.

National Transportation Safety Board member Steve Chealander said investigators have located the steering column, or yoke; all the propeller blades; five of six deicing valves; and rubber bladders designed to protect the tail from ice.

Though ice has emerged as a possible factor, the cause has remained elusive in part because there was no distress call from the pilot, no mechanical failure has been identified and the plane was so severely damaged.

The crew had turned on the plane's deicing system 11 minutes after leaving Newark, N.J. Shortly before the crash, they notified air traffic controllers that they were experiencing significant ice buildup.

Chealander said Sunday that the pilot appeared to ignore recommendations by the NTSB and his employer that the autopilot be turned off in icy conditions. The autopilot remained on until an automatic system warned that a stall could occur, pushed the yoke forward and shut the autopilot off.

Chealander acknowledged that it was possible that the pilot overreacted by yanking the yoke back, further destabilizing the plane, but he said that was one of an almost unlimited number of possibilities.

Kirk Koenig, president of Expert Aviation Consulting of Indianapolis and a commercial aviation pilot for 25 years, said the airplane may have been in a predicament that would challenge even the most experienced pilots.

For example, if ice were forming on the wings, the pilot would want to put the nose of the plane down and increase power; if the icing were on the tail, the opposite would have been required, pulling the nose up and reducing power.

"Things happened so quickly and they were so low to the ground that it would not have mattered if Chuck Yeager and Neil Armstrong were flying the plane; there wouldn't have been a different outcome," Koenig said.

Kids' cholesterol study reassuring, doctors say

DALLAS (AP)—Fewer than 1 percent of American teens are likely to need cholesterol drugs, says a new study that offers some reassuring news on the childhood obesity front.

Last year, the American Academy of Pediatrics issued eyebrow-raising new guidelines: Doctors were urged to consider cholesterol drugs for more kids, even as young as 8, if they had high levels of "bad cholesterol," or LDL, along with other health problems like obesity and high blood pressure.

The academy didn't address how many children might fall into that category. Now, a new study published online Monday in the American Heart Association's journal Circulation helps allay concerns that "many, many" children might need to be on cholesterol drugs, said Dr. Stephen Daniels, lead author of the pediatric guidelines.

"The concern was I think, because there's an increasing level in obesity, that it would lead to higher and higher cholesterol levels. They don't seem to be going up," he said.

The new pediatrics guidance was based on growing evidence that damage leading to heart disease begins early in life. At the same time, recent research has shown that cholesterol-fighting drugs are generally safe for children.

For the new study, researchers looked at data from about 10,000 children who took part in a national government health survey from 1999 to 2006. Of those, about 2,700 in the 12-to-17 group had LDL levels measured. About 5 percent to 7 percent of these youth had elevated LDL.

Then the researchers checked those numbers against the pediatric academy guidelines, advising other factors that should be weighed in recommending medication. About 0.8 percent fit the profile of those needing treatment with cholesterol-lowering drugs to ward off future heart problems. Based on 25 million Americans in that age group, the findings translate to about 200,000 young people.

"I think it provides some perspective on the issue," said lead study author Dr. Earl Ford, medical officer in the U.S. Public Health Service.

Burris: Feds' questions didn't prompt admissions

CHICAGO (AP)—Sen. Roland Burris insisted Monday that a newly released affidavit outlining contacts with ousted Gov. Rod Blagojevich's brother and other advisers was voluntary and not the result of contact from federal agents investigating the former governor.

"It was done because we promised the (impeachment) committee we would supplement information in case we missed anything," Burris said Monday before embarking on trip to talk with constituents. "End of story."

Burris released an affidavit over the weekend in which he admitted Blagojevich's brother asked him for campaign fundraising help before Blagojevich appointed Burris to the Senate.

The disclosure is at odds with Burris' testimony in January, when the Illinois House impeachment committee specifically asked whether he had ever spoken to Robert Blagojevich or other aides to the now-deposed governor about the Senate seat vacated by President Barack Obama.

The discrepancy could mean Burris perjured himself.

But the Democratic senator insisted Monday that the Feb. 4 affidavit was merely a promised supplement, not a contradiction, to his testimony before the committee and was not requested as part of the federal corruption investigation of Blagojevich's administration.

"There was no change of any of our testimony," Burris, 71, said. "We followed up as we promised the impeachment committee. ... The information that's being reported in terms of that this was done because of a fed statement is absolutely, positively not true."

Blagojevich appointed Burris to the Senate Dec. 30, three weeks after the governor was arrested on a federal complaint that he tried to trade the Senate post for campaign cash or a high-paying job. The House impeached him and the Senate removed him from office Jan. 29.

The affidavit's release prompted state Republican leaders to call for Burris' resignation and a perjury investigation while members of his own party, including Blagojevich successor Gov. Pat Quinn, say they would like a full explanation from Burris.

Octuplets' grandmother conciliatory in interview

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The mother of the Southern California woman who used a fertility doctor to give birth to octuplets sounded a conciliatory note toward her daughter in a TV interview posted online Monday.

Angela Suleman has sharply criticized her daughter Nadya Suleman's decision to expand her family through artificial insemination despite already having six young children.

But in an interview on CBS's "The Early Show" posted on the network's Web site, Angela Suleman said her anger subsided after she saw the babies.

"I thought, 'My goodness, these are my grandchildren. They're so tiny and fragile. I'll have to be there for them, you know, like I was for the others,'" she said.

"You can resent your daughter for just so long and then you see that she's trying so hard to take care of these children," Angela Suleman said. "She's a very good mother ... but then she had a good example."

Nadya Suleman's six older children have been living in Angela Suleman's three-bedroom home.

Angela Suleman said she won't have enough space for the octuplets, who were born last month, when they are released from the hospital, and that she will have to help her daughter move into another home.

She said she already spends her entire retirement income caring for the six grandchildren who live with her.

"My retirement check goes every month," she said. "It's just gone."

Asia

Clinton warns NKorea on missile launch

TOKYO (AP)—Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton on Tuesday warned North Korea against following through on a threatened missile launch, saying it would damage its prospects for improved relations with the United States and the world.

In Tokyo on her first trip abroad as America's top diplomat, Clinton also stressed U.S. commitment to Japan's security, signed a military deal to advance that and underscored the importance of the alliance by inviting Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aso to Washington next week.

Aso, deeply unpopular at home, will be the first foreign leader to visit President Barack Obama at the White House, and the Feb. 24 summit is a sign that the world's two largest economies know they have a special responsibility to deal the global financial crisis, Clinton said.

She had hoped to broaden U.S.-Asian relations to include climate change, clean energy and the world's economic woes on her maiden overseas voyage, but North Korea and its increasingly belligerent rhetoric toward its neighbors were clearly at the top of her agenda.

Just before she arrived in Japan on Monday, North Korea used the 67th birthday of its leader Kim Jong Il to claim it has the right to "space development"—a term it has used in the past to disguise a long-range missile test as a satellite launch.

A day later, Clinton, without prompting, told reporters at a joint news conference with Japanese Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone that such a move would jeopardize the Obama administration's willingness to work for better ties with Pyongyang.

"The possible missile launch that North Korea is talking about would be very unhelpful in moving our relationship forward," she said, adding that if Pyongyang wants to end its isolation it also has to fulfill unmet denuclearization pledges made during the Bush administration.

"The decision as to whether North Korea will cooperate in the six-party talks, end provocative language and actions is up to them and we are watching very closely," Clinton said, referring to the six-nation talks aimed at getting North Korea to abandon nuclear weapons.

"If North Korea abides by the obligations it has already entered into and verifiably and completely eliminates its nuclear program, then there will be a reciprocal response certainly from the United States," she said. "It is truly up to the North Koreans."

Those responses include a chance to normalize relations with the United States, formally ending the 1950-53 Korean War with a peace treaty to replace the current armistice, as well as energy, financial and humanitarian assistance for the North Korean people.

AP

Japan's Foreign Minister Hirofumi Nakasone, right, speaks as Secretary of State Hillary Clinton listens during their joint news conference at the Iikura Guest House in Tokyo, Japan Tuesday, Feb. 17, 2009.

Clinton also vowed to keep up pressure on the North to resolve Japan's concerns about the status of Japanese citizens abducted by Pyongyang in the 1970s and '80s. She met with relatives of some abductees in a private session at the U.S. Embassy to promise such steps.

Many abductee families were angered by the Bush administration's decision last year to remove North Korea from the U.S. list of state sponsors of terrorism as an incentive in the nuclear talks without addressing their concerns.

At the meeting, representatives of the families presented Clinton with a letter repeating their disappointment with the step and asked that the Obama administration put North Korea back on the list pending a resolution to the abductee issue. There was no immediate response to the letter from U.S. officials.

Clinton said the United States remained firmly committed to the defense of its allies in the region, particularly Japan and South Korea, and signed an agreement with Nakasone to reduce tensions caused by the presence of U.S. troops on Japanese soil.

Under the deal, which has been in the works for years, 8,000 Marines now stationed on the Japanese island of Okinawa will be moved to the U.S. Pacific territory of Guam. There are 50,000 American troops in Japan, about 20,000 of them on Okinawa.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Filipino workers' 2008 remittances up 13.7 percent

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—Filipinos working overseas sent home $16.4 billion in 2008—13.7 percent more than in the previous year—despite the global economic downturn, the Philippine central bank said Monday. The figure, which comprises 10.4 percent of the country's gross domestic product, surpassed the bank's forecast of a 13 percent rise to US$16.3 billion. Nearly 10 percent of the country's 90 million people work overseas, and the money they send home is a key contributor to the Philippine economy. Central Bank Gov. Amando Tetangco credited the better-than-expected performance to sustained demand for Filipino workers worldwide—particularly professional and skilled workers—and greater access to expanded remittance facilities. "Amidst the challenges posed by the global financial market strains and the economic downturn experienced by host economies, remittances from overseas Filipinos remain a dependable source of foreign exchange for the economy," Tetangco said in a statement.

Job cuts swell ranks of homeless in Japan

TOKYO (AP)—In corporate Japan, losing your job can mean losing your home as well. As major companies cut their work forces in the economic downturn, many Japanese workers are finding themselves out on the street because they have to move out of company-run dormitories. Sadanori Suzuki was one of them. The 26-year-old lost his job at a car factory in December, and by mid-January he was kicked out of the dorm run by his employer. He moved from Internet cafes—which often have private rooms and double as flop houses—to "capsule" hotels, which are coffin-like individual compartments just for sleeping. But within two weeks he was nearly broke and out on the street. He found his way to a Shinto shrine in Kawagoe, a Tokyo suburb, where he planned to take temporary refuge. But the worship hall was locked. Exasperated, Suzuki set fire on the shrine, then called police from a nearby pay phone and turned himself in. When he was arrested, last week, he had only 10 yen (11 cents).

South Korea's first Roman Catholic cardinal dies

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Cardinal Stephen Kim Sou-hwan, South Korea's first cardinal and a tireless advocate for democracy who stood up to a string of military dictators, died Monday. He was 86. Kim was ordained as cardinal by Pope Paul VI in 1969. He passed away at Seoul's St. Mary's Hospital, said Lee Hee-yeon, an official with the Archdiocese of Seoul. Pope Benedict XVI, in a telegram to Cardinal Nicholas Cheong Jin-suk, the archbishop of Seoul, said he was "deeply saddened" by Kim's death, according to the Vatican. President Lee Myung-bak, a devout Protestant, said Kim "played a huge role during crisis" times and called his death "a great national loss." South Korea was ruled by military strongmen from 1961 until the late 1980s and Kim was outspoken in calling for the country's democratization, using his Easter sermon in 1987 to lash out at the government of President Chun Doo-hwan as "despotic."

Khmer Rouge genocide trial opens in Cambodia

PHNOM PENH, Cambodia (AP)—A notorious torture center boss went before Cambodia's genocide tribunal Tuesday for its first trial over the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people at the hands of the Khmer Rouge regime more than three decades ago.

Kaing Guek Eav—better known as Duch, who headed the S-21 prison in Phnom Penh—is charged with crimes against humanity and is the first of five defendants scheduled for long-delayed trials by the U.N.-assisted tribunal. The hearing Tuesday was procedural, and testimony was expected to begin only in late March.

Duch, driven to the hearing in a bulletproof car from a nearby detention center, intently followed the proceedings in a courtroom packed with some 500 people.

"It is not only me wanting justice today. All Cambodian people have been waiting for 30 years now," said Vann Nath, one of less than 20 survivors of S-21, who attended the hearing. "I look at Duch today and he seems like an old, very gentle man. It was much different 30 years ago."

Vann Nath, who survived by painting and sculpting portraits of Khmer Rouge leader Pol Pot, described Duch as a "very cruel man."

Duch, 66, is accused of committing or abetting a range of crimes including murder, torture and rape at S-21 prison—formerly a school—where up to 16,000 men, women and children were held and tortured, before being put to death.

"This first hearing represents the realization of significant efforts to establish a fair and independent tribunal to try those in leadership positions and those most responsible for violations of Cambodian and international law," presiding judge Nil Nonn told the chamber.

Duch has made no formal confession. However, unlike the other four defendants, Duch "admitted or acknowledged" in some of the 21 interviews by investigating judges that many of the crimes occurred at his prison, according to the indictment from court judges. Duch, who converted to Christianity, has also asked for forgiveness from his victims.

Pakistan inks truce deal with militants in NW area

PESHAWAR, Pakistan (AP)—Pakistan agreed Monday to suspend military offensives and impose Islamic law in part of the restive northwest, making a gesture it hopes will help calm the Taliban insurgency while rejecting Washington's call for tougher measures against militants.

A U.S. defense official called the deal "a negative development," and some Pakistani experts expressed skepticism the truce would decrease violence. One human rights activist said the accord was "a great surrender" to militants.

Elsewhere in the northwest, missiles fired by a suspected U.S. spy plane killed 30 people in a house used by an extremist commander, witnesses said. It was the deadliest of almost three dozen apparent American attacks on al-Qaida and Taliban targets in the semiautonomous tribal lands close to the Afghan border since last year.

Monday's peace agreement applies to the Malakand region, which includes the former tourist destination of the Swat Valley, where extremists have gained sway by beheading people, burning girls schools and attacking security forces since a similar agreement broke down in August.

U.S. officials complained the earlier accord allowed militants to regroup and rearm and urged Pakistan's government to concentrate on military solutions to the insurgency in the rugged frontier region, where al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden is believed to be hiding.

The new agreement intensified that unease.

Newest US troops in dangerous region near Kabul

LOGAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (AP)—Close to 3,000 American soldiers who recently arrived in Afghanistan to secure two violent provinces near Kabul have begun operations in the field and already are seeing combat, the unit's spokesman said Monday.

The new troops are the first wave of an expected surge of reinforcements this year. The process began to take shape under President George Bush but has been given impetus by President Barack Obama's call for an increased focus on Afghanistan.

U.S. commanders have been contemplating sending up to 30,000 more soldiers to bolster the 33,000 already here, but the new administration is expected to initially approve only a portion of that amount. White House press secretary Robert Gibbs said Monday the president would decide soon.

The new unit—the 3rd Brigade Combat Team of the 10th Mountain Division—moved into Logar and Wardak provinces last month, and the soldiers from Fort Drum, N.Y., are now stationed in combat outposts throughout the provinces.

World

British, French nuclear subs collide in Atlantic

LONDON (AP)—Nuclear submarines from Britain and France collided deep in the Atlantic Ocean this month, authorities said Monday in the first acknowledgment of a highly unusual accident that one expert called the gravest in nearly a decade.

Officials said the low-speed crash did not damage the vessels' nuclear reactors or missiles or cause radiation to leak. But anti-nuclear groups said it was still a frightening reminder of the risks posed by submarines prowling the oceans powered by radioactive material and bristling with nuclear weapons.

The first public indication of a mishap came when France reported in a little-noticed Feb. 6 statement that one of its submarine had struck a submerged object—perhaps a shipping container. But confirmation of the accident only came after British media reported it.

France's defense ministry said Monday that the sub Le Triomphant and the HMS Vanguard, the oldest vessel in Britain's nuclear-armed submarine fleet, were on routine patrol when they collided in the Atlantic this month. It did not say exactly when, where or how the accident occurred.

France said that Le Triomphant suffered damage to a sonar dome—where navigation and detection equipment is stored—and limped home to its base on L'Ile Longue on France's western tip. HMS Vanguard returned to a submarine base in Scotland with visible dents and scrapes, the BBC reported.

"The two submarines came into contact at very low speed," Britain's First Sea Lord, Admiral Jonathon Band, said. Band, Britain's most senior naval officer, offered no further explanation.

HMS Vanguard came into service in 1993, has a crew of around 140 and typically carries 16 Lockheed Trident D5 missiles. Under government policy, British nuclear submarines carry a maximum of 48 warheads. At least one of Britain's four submarines is on patrol and ready to fire at any given time.

AP

In this Oct. 25, 1992 file photo, sailors are seen aboard the HMS Vanguard, in Holy Loch, Scotland. Nuclear-armed submarines from Britain and France collided deep under the Atlantic Ocean earlier this month, causing damage to both vessels but releasing no radioactivity, a British official said Monday, Feb. 16, 2009.

France's Le Triomphant carries 111 crew and 15 nuclear missiles, according to defense analysis group Jane's.

"This is the most severe incident involving a nuclear submarine since the sinking of the Kursk in 2000 and the first time since the Cold War that two nuclear-armed subs are known to have collided," said Kate Hudson, head of Britain's Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.

Russia's Kursk nuclear submarine crashed to the bottom of the Barents Sea during a training voyage in August 2000, killing all 118 crew members.

In March 2007 two British sailors were killed in an explosion on board HMS Tireless during a war game beneath the Arctic ice cap. The same submarine crashed into an object, possibly an iceberg, while on patrol in the Arctic in May 2003. And in November 2002 HMS Trafalgar suffered considerable external damage after running aground on rocks off Scotland while taking part in a two-week training exercise

"It's an absolute one in a million chance that the two submarines were in the same place at the same time," said Lee Willett, head of the maritime studies program at the Royal United Services Institute, a London-based military think tank. "There is no precedent of an incident like this—it's a freak accident," he said.

US calls for treaty on mercury reduction

NAIROBI, Kenya (AP)—The Obama administration reversed years of U.S. policy Monday by calling for a treaty to cut mercury pollution, which it described as the world's gravest chemical problem.

Some 6,000 tons of mercury enter the environment each year, about a third generated by power stations and coal fires. Much settles into the oceans where it enters the food chain and is concentrated in predatory fish like tuna.

Children and fetuses are particularly vulnerable to poisoning by the toxic metal, which can cause birth defects, brain damage and peeling skin.

Daniel Reifsnyder, the deputy assistant secretary of state for environment and sustainable development, told a global gathering of environmental ministers in Nairobi, Kenya, that the U.S wants negotiations on limiting mercury to begin this year and conclude within three.

"We're prepared to help lead in developing a globally legally binding instrument," he said. "It is clear mercury is the most important global chemical issue facing us today that calls for immediate action."

Israel seizes land for settlement expansion

EFRAT, West Bank (AP)—Plans to expand a West Bank settlement by up to 2,500 homes drew Palestinian condemnation Monday and presented an early test for President Barack Obama, whose Mideast envoy is well known for opposing such construction.

Israel opened the way for possible expansion of the Efrat settlement by taking control of a nearby West Bank hill of 423 acres. The rocky plot was recently designated state land and is part of a master plan that envisions the settlement growing from 9,000 to 30,000 residents, Efrat Mayor Oded Revivi said.

Israeli officials said any new construction would require several years more of planning and stages of approval.

The outgoing government of Prime Minister Ehud Olmert has said it reserves the right to keep building in large West Bank settlement blocs that it wants to annex as part of a final peace deal with the Palestinians. Efrat is in one of those blocs.

The composition of Israel's next government is not clear yet, because last week's elections were inconclusive. However, right-wing parties are given a better chance to form a ruling coalition, with hard-line leader Benjamin Netanyahu as prime minister.

Speaking to U.S. Jewish leaders Monday, the two contenders for leading the new Israeli government expressed their differences over the Palestinian issue.

Foreign Minister Tzipi Livni, whose centrist Kadima party won 28 of the 120 seats in parliament, said Israel must withdraw from "parts of the Land of Israel," a reference to the West Bank, in a peace deal.

Netanyahu, whose hawkish Likud won 27 seats, said he does not want to govern Palestinians but insisted on Israeli control of borders, airspace and electronic communications.

Netanyahu supports settlement expansion and has derided peace talks with the Palestinians as a waste of time, saying he would focus instead on trying to improve the Palestinian economy. Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas has called Netanyahu's approach unacceptable, and his aides said recently that peace talks can resume only if settlement construction is halted.

France's role in Holocaust legally recognized

PARIS (AP)—France's top judicial body on Monday formally recognized the nation's role in deporting Jews to Nazi death camps during the Holocaust—but effectively ruled out any more reparations for the deportees or their families.

Jewish groups welcomed the ruling by the Council of State, the clearest legal acknowledgment to date of France's role in the Holocaust. Nearly 70 years ago, the Vichy government helped deport some 76,000 people—including 11,000 children—from Nazi-occupied France to concentration camps during the war. Fewer than 3,000 returned alive.

The council said that the French government of the time "allowed or facilitated the deportation from France of victims of anti-Semitic persecution."

"In an absolute rupture with the values and principles notably of the dignity of the human person ... these anti-Semitic persecutions provoked exceptional damage of extreme gravity," it said.

The statement legally formalized a historic gesture by then-President Jacques Chirac in 1995, when he became the first French leader to say the nation bore responsibility for the deportation of Jews in wartime France. Chirac broke with the official position that France's Vichy regime was not synonymous with the French state.

"For us, it was France. The uniforms were French. The Germans did not always ask the Vichy government to do what it did," said Serge Klarsfeld, a renowned French Nazi hunter and Holocaust historian.

WORLD BRIEFS

Roadside bombs kill 8 Iraqi Shiite pilgrims

BAGHDAD (AP)—Roadside bombs struck a pair of minibuses filled with Shiite pilgrims returning to Baghdad on Monday, killing eight people, officials said, in the latest of a series of deadly attacks targeting the pilgrims. The first bomb rocked a minibus pulling into a busy square in the Shiite neighborhood of Sadr City in Baghdad, killing four and wounding 11 others, said a police official. The driver, who refused to give his name, said his minibus was filled with pilgrims returning from the Shiite holy city of Karbala, 50 miles (80 kilometers) south of the capital. The second minibus, also coming from Karbala, was hit in the Shiite neighborhood of al-Kamaliya in southeast Baghdad, killing four people and wounding 13 others, said the police official. Medical officials confirmed the number of dead and wounded in the two attacks. All the officials spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to talk to the media.

Iran moves to boost its air defense capabilities

TEHRAN, Iran (AP)—Iran restructured its military in an effort to improve its air defense capabilities, military commanders have said. The move is seen as part of a broader military build up by Tehran, which is concerned about the U.S. military's presence in neighboring Iraq and Afghanistan and Israeli threats to target its nuclear facilities. Gen. Ahmad Mighani announced over the weekend that Iran's supreme leader ordered a new branch be split off from the air force to deal specifically with any threats to the country's air space. The order rearranges the regular military into four branches—the ground force, the navy, the air force and the air defense force, he said. The commander of the new force will oversee radar, military intelligence gathering equipment and anti-aircraft missile units, Mighani said. He did not elaborate.

Russian president replaces 4 regional governors

MOSCOW (AP)—President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia replaced four provincial governors on Monday for their poor performance amid financial crisis. Before announcing the move, Medvedev said in a televised interview over the weekend that some provincial leaders were not up to the task. "We aren't going to close eyes on flaws in work and, simply speaking, ineptness, sloppiness and carelessness of some officials," Medvedev told Rossiya state television. On Monday, he named new governors for the western Oryol, Pskov and Voronezh regions and the northern Nenets region. The changes are subject to approval by provincial legislatures, which are expected to do that soon. Medvedev said in the weekend interview that plunging energy prices made it necessary to increase the efficiency of the government. "It was easy to work at times when we had high revenues from oil and gas exports," Medvedev said. "In the current situation, it's necessary to learn how to spend public money in a rational way and show managerial skills."

Campus Life

Two slots open for DC scholarship program

Two students from the Northern Mariana Islands have a chance to be selected to receive a two-month, expenses-paid summer scholarship working on coral reef management initiatives with an agency member of the U.S. Coral Reef Task Force in Washington, D.C.

The 6th Annual Governor Tauese P.F. Sunia Memorial Coral Reef Conservation Summer Scholarship Award provides students a unique opportunity to gain valuable, professionally formative experience in coral reef conservation policy and management while also contributing to the overall efforts of the hosting agency and the USCRTF.

This scholarship is now open for applications and students eligible to apply include not just those in the CNMI but also Guam, Hawaii, American Samoa, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or the Freely Associated States of Palau, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The scholarship program is in recognition of the late American Samoa governor's outstanding leadership in and contribution to the conservation U.S. coral reef ecosystems.

The late Governor Sunia is most remembered for being an eloquent and impassioned advocate for coral reef protection and management at the local level, not only in American Samoa, but throughout the U.S. and the Pacific region. The results of his efforts and dedication can be seen in the many accomplishments at the local, national, and global levels, making the late governor a true world leader in coral reef protection. This award is intended to continue the governor's legacy by providing an outstanding college or university student the chance to develop professional coral reef management skills to be applied in their local jurisdiction.

Since 2004, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Coral Reef Conservation Program and the Department of Interior's Office of Insular Affairs and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have hosted Sunia scholars from the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Republic of Palau.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Leena Muller, middle right, 2008 Sunia Scholar, poses with the NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program staff.

Eligibility

In order to be considered for this award, applicants must meet the following minimum requirements:

■ Be currently enrolled in an associate's or bachelor's degree program in marine policy or science with emphasis on coral reefs; and have completed a minimum of one academic year of study in that program.

■ Have demonstrated interest and work on coral reef issues; and

■ Be a legal resident of American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Hawaii, the Freely Associated States, the U.S. Virgin Islands, or Puerto Rico.

Application Selection Timetable

Applications received by: Feb. 27, 2009, 5pm

Award winner notified: March 20, 2009

Application Material

All applicants wishing to be considered for the award should submit the following material:

■ Unofficial copies of all college and/or university transcripts.

■ Resume.

■ One letter of recommendation from a professor or relevant employer.

■ A 750 word essay (maximum) on the importance of managing coral reefs in your island jurisdiction and nationally; and how this internship will benefit your career goals related to coral reef management in your island.

Application material may be sent by mail, fax, or email and must be received no later than February 27, 2009, 5:00PM EST, to the following:

USCRTF Governor Sunia Award
c/o Sarah Bobbe
NOAA Coral Reef Conservation Program
1305 East West Hwy, N/OCRM
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Email: sarah.bobbe@noaa.gov or sarah_bobbe@ios.doi.gov
Phone: 301-713-3155 ext. 174; or 202-208-1378
Fax: 301-713-4387

MATH OLYMPIAD

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

First grade winner Arvin Dayao, second from right, poses with the other participants in Grace Christian Academy's 2009 Math Olympiad, held Jan. 30, 2009, at the campus chapel. This annual event features competitions from grades 1 to 5.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Second grade winner Marcelo Masilungan Jr., leftmost, poses with the other Grade 2 participants in Grace Christian Academy's 2009 Math Olympiad.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Peter Luis Camacho, center, won the 2009 Math Olympiad Grade 3 division.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Fourth grade winner Francis Joseph Dalusung, rightmost, poses with the other Grade 4 participants in Grace Christian Academy's 2009 Math Olympiad.

Life & Style

Marpac launches 2 European beers at Hyatt

By NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
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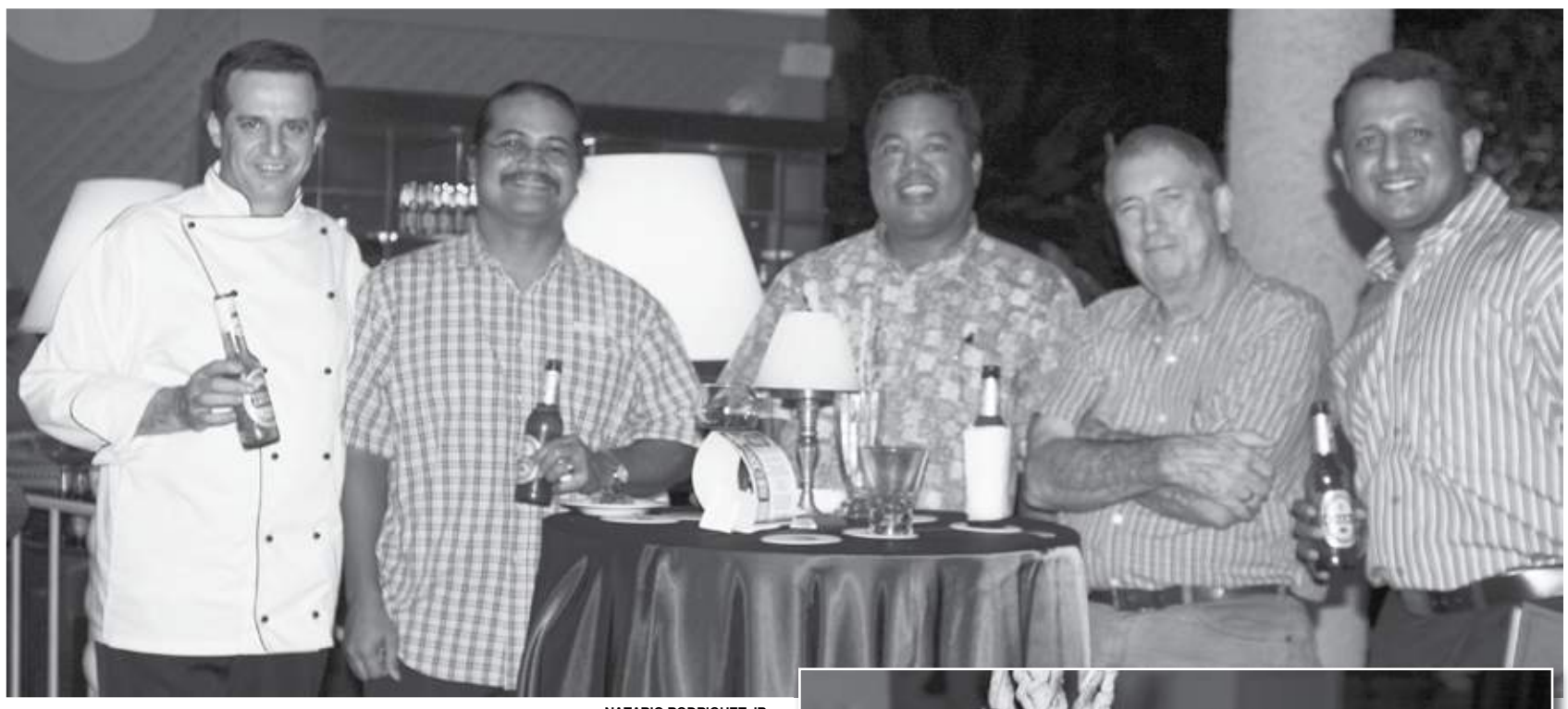
REPORTER



NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
From left to right are Hyatt Regency Saipan executive chef Gabriel Colombo, Marianas Pacific Dist. Inc. sales manager Melvin Tenorio, Triple J sales manager Jay Santos, Triple J general manager Ken Forrester and Hyatt Regency Saipan F&B director Ranjeet Rajebhosale.

Marianas Pacific District Inc. recently introduced into the local market two new beer products that originate from two European countries: Beck's from Germany and Stella Artois from Belgium.

The official launching was done Thursday night last week at the lobby of Hyatt Regency Saipan with some of the hotel's club members and friends.

Marpac sales manger Melvin Tenorio said the two new beer brands have been in the market for two months now.

"Beck's is the No. 1 selling German beer in the world and Stella Artois is the best selling Belgian beer in the world. They can be bought at the Joeten Supermart and we're planning to make them available in some of the bars and stores but as of now the outlets are limited," Tenorio said.

He said a lot of people on Saipan are beginning to recognize the new beers, which both come in green bottles.

Stella Artois has been brewed in Belgium since 1366, using only natural ingredients and traditional brewing process. It is slightly stronger, with an alcohol content of 5.2 percent.

Beck's Pilsner, which won gold medals from the American Tasting Institutes in 1999 and 2000, has a slightly fruity but firm crispness that ends with a clean, dry finish. It has about 5 percent alcohol content.

"We received a lot of good feedback and so we continue to carry on. This is part of expanding our product lines aside from the Budweiser from the U.S.," Tenorio said.

The price per bottle at the hotel is $6.50 for both Beck's and Stella Artois but both will be cheaper at stores.

"We're trying to bring in new brands because we want to satisfy the demands of the local consumers. Saipan is a small demographic area but any small consumption is important to us so we will continue to bring in more domestic consumption,'" Tenorio stressed.

MARPAC thanked Hyatt for its continued support of its products and its decision to make Beck's and Stella Artois available for its guests.

"We also want to thank them for providing us the awesome food," Tenorio said.

Hyatt's Food and Beverage Director Ranjeet Rajebhosale said the launching of a new product is being done at the hotel on a regular basis.

Beck's is featured this week for the annual German Food Festival from Feb. 16-21 at the Hyatt's Kili Restaurant. The festival will highlight German food, sausages, cheese, beer and other selections.

"So this launching of the two beers is the right timing," Rajebhosale said.

NAZARIO RODRIGUEZ JR.
MARPAC launched this two new beers, Germany's Beck's and Belgium's Stella Artois, Thursday night last week at the Hyatt Regency Saipan.

British author says she is banned from Dubai event

LONDON (AP)—A British author said Monday she has been banned from a Dubai literary festival because her forthcoming novel contains references to homosexuality.

The first International Festival of Literature in Dubai, which runs from Feb. 26 to Mar. 1, has authors including Margaret Atwood, Louis de Bernieres and Jung Chang listed on the program.

Geraldine Bedell, a journalist for the Observer newspaper and the author of several previous novels, said organizers had been discussing launching her book, "The Gulf Between Us," which is set in the Gulf, at the festival.

But she claims festival director Isobel Abulhoul later wrote to her publishers, saying: "I don't want our festival remembered for the launch of a controversial book."

"The Gulf Between Us" is scheduled to be published by Penguin in April.

The Associated Press made repeated attempts to contact Dubai officials and the festival organizers for comment, but there was no answer at the festival offices, and government officials did not immediately respond.

Bedell said Abulhoul wrote to Penguin toward the end of last year to say the book was not acceptable because one of her characters, Sheikh Rashid, is gay. The author also said festival organizers complained that "it talks about Islam and queries what is said."

Bedell, who lived in Bahrain for five years in the 1980s, said Sheikh Rashid "is only spoken about" and "assumed to be gay."

"Of course it does make reference to Islam because it's a Muslim country and part of it is set during Ramadan," she added. "But the narrator—a middle-aged Englishwoman—is incredibly respectful to Islam."

Another criticism from the organizers, according to Bedell, was that "it is set in the Gulf and focuses on the Iraq war." But she said the book's action was set in the months leading up to the Iraq war.

"They (festival organizers) were talking to Penguin about the possibility of launching my book there because my book is set in the Gulf and there are few books in English set in the Gulf," she told The Associated Press.

"It seemed to be a very good fit and everyone was very enthusiastic about it and it was full steam ahead, and then they had a copy of the book and then they wrote to Penguin and said 'No, it's not acceptable'.

New e-book captures kids' hopes, dreams for Obama

NEW YORK (AP)—End war, forever. Make the planet greener. Please help my dad find work. Make it rain candy!

Thousands of kids detailed their hopes and expectations for President Barack Obama in letters and drawings as part of a worldwide project, with 150 chosen for a free e-book being released on Presidents Day.

Most had tall orders for the new guy in the White House.

Anthony Pape, 10, of Du Bois, Pa., offered: "I hope that we will have no war ever again. I mean why are we fighting why can't we all be friends."

Fellow 10-year-old Sasha Townsend of Soquel, Calif., had a similar request, and then some.

"I would appreciate it if you would try to make this a greener planet and try to bring home the troops and end the war," the fifth-grader wrote. "I am very luckey because I am not part of a military family, but it saddens me to hear about all the people who die in Iraque and know that somewhere In the world people are greiving over a lost family member."

Seven-year-old Aaron Van Blerkom's letter was simpler—but no less problematic.

"Dear Mr. Obama," the Pasadena, Calif., first-grader began, "Please Make it rain candy!"

The "Dear Mr. President" project was a joint effort between the National Education Association and kidthing.com, which is putting out the book for use with its downloadable media player. A special hardcopy edition of the book will be sent to the White House for Obama, who has done wonders to bring the office of the presidency to life for young people.

The letters were written in January amid Obama-mania at inauguration time as schools scrambled to bus kids to special viewing events and come up with computer screens and TVs for them to watch in classrooms and auditoriums.

Kids ages 5-12 were eligible to participate. Submissions flooded kidthing, including some from other nations.

Lawrence Hitchcock, chief executive officer of the Web site, said more than 4,500 letters were considered for the book on a heart-wrenching range of topics that don't stop at an end to the war and climate change.

"We had, `My dad's out of work, fix the company, please get more jobs,' Hitchcock said. "There were Latino kids saying, `Please change the immigration laws so my dad can come back from Mexico.' This is a profound snapshot of a social narrative of young kids during an important moment in history. It really kind of stunned us what came in through the front door."

Publisher Alfred Knopf Jr. dies at age 90

NEW YORK (AP)—Alfred A. Knopf Jr., son of publishing legends and an influential publisher in his own right, died Saturday. He was 90.

Knopf died of medical complications from a fall in mid-January, his wife, Alice, said.

Knopf was the only child of Alfred Knopf and Blanche Wolf Knopf, giants in the field of publishing. He left his parents' company, Alfred A. Knopf Inc., in 1959 to co-found Atheneum Publishers along with Simon Michael Bessie and Hiram Haydn.

Among Atheneum's releases were Theodore White's "The Making of the President, 1960," Frederic Morton's "The Rothschilds: A Family Portrait" and Edward Albee's play "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf."

The company published one of Mario Puzo's books but declined to publish "The Godfather."

In later years, the company merged with Charles Scribner's Sons to form Scribner Book Companies. That company was acquired by Macmillan Inc., and Knopf became a senior vice president.

Knopf retired from publishing in 1988.

Washington painting in NY gets new frame, touchup

NEW YORK (AP)—The iconic painting that depicts George Washington crossing the Delaware River is getting even more dazzling. The plain frame that held the room-size painting is being replaced with an ornate recreation of its original.

A recently discovered photograph showing Emanuel Leutze's "Washington Crossing the Delaware" with an elaborate border during an 1864 exhibition inspired the Metropolitan Museum of Art to replace the plain frame.

The masterwork's current frame "minimized it," said Carrie Rebora Barratt, the Met's curator of American paintings and sculpture, although it's difficult to imagine how the painting, more than 21 feet by 12 feet, could be missed.

Leutze painted the masterpiece in 1851, depicting Washington and his companions crossing an ice-strewn Delaware River from Pennsylvania to New Jersey. Washington crossed the river on Dec. 25, 1776, in a surprise attack during the Revolutionary War.

Eli Wilner, whose company has made frames for the Met, was hired to recreate the original golden frame—an intricate and large project that takes up more than 250 square feet at Wilner's workshop in Queens.

Leutze had specifically ordered the original, which bore shields at each corner and was topped with an eagle crest and a ribbon that marked lines from George Washington's eulogy: "First in War, First in Peace, and First in the Hearts of his Countrymen."

In the world of frame-making, "this is by far the largest complex project that anyone's ever undertaken in America," Wilner said.

About 30 employees have been involved since the process began in November 2007. Wilner said an Ecuadorean carver, Felix Teran, spent nearly eight months creating the pieces for the crest.

Work continues on the new frame, as employees painstakingly apply clay to the shields or thousands of thin gold leaves to gild the wood.

Wilner and the Met wouldn't disclose the cost of the frame, but Wilner said anyone who wanted to repeat the effort could expect to pay around $800,000.

AP

This picture provided by the Metropolitan Museum of Art shows the painting "Washington Crossing the Delaware" by Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze.

Dada and surrealist masterpieces make US stop

CINCINNATI (AP)—Mona Lisa with a mustache and goatee. A white porcelain urinal.

Pieces that once shocked the art world highlight a new exhibition featuring dada and surrealist masterpieces challenging the perception of what is real.

The works by artists such as Salvador Dali, Pablo Picasso and Man Ray will make their only U.S. appearance at the Cincinnati Art Museum beginning Sunday.

The collection surveys two of the most significant art movements of the 20th century through more than 200 works including paintings, sculptures, collages, photographs and film drawn from the Israel Museum in Jerusalem.

"We really wanted to share this wealth of material as broadly as possible, and bringing it to the American Midwest seemed like a wonderful way to give it new exposure," James Snyder, director of the Israel Museum, said. "This is the first time that we have sent such an extensive display of dada and surrealist holdings in a single exhibition."

The exhibition traces surrealism beginning with its roots in the avant-garde dada movement that began in 1916 in response to the devastation of World of War I.

Dada artists, blaming society for the horrors of the war, rejected Victorian values and traditional expectations of art through absurd and provocative images such as Marcel Duchamp's "Fountain." The porcelain urinal he submitted under that title to an artists' exhibit shocked the art world in 1917.

AP

Roni Rabner looks at a Rene Magritte painting that is reflected on a glass table, Tuesday, Feb. 10, 2009, at the Cincinnati Art Museum in Cincinnati.

Showdown set in Polanski case but he won't be there

LOS ANGELES (AP)—After months of legal maneuvers, it's time for the much anticipated courtroom showdown on director Roman Polanski's effort to have a 31-year-old sex prosecution against him dismissed.

Polanski's campaign to clear himself of fugitive status was sparked by an HBO documentary film, "Roman Polanski: Wanted and Desired," which disclosed new information about actions by the now deceased judge who presided over his case, a scenario that his lawyers say amounted to misconduct.

But the central issue in Tuesday's hearing will not be the allegations of misconduct but rather the question of whether Polanski's case can be heard without his presence.

The director has said through his lawyer that he doesn't plan to be at the hearing; in fact, he says he has no plans to ever set foot in the United States again.

If he chose to appear for the hearing in his case, he would likely be arrested on a fugitive warrant.

The district attorney's office has argued in documents that as a fugitive, Polanski is not entitled to the processes of the court unless he appears in person to request dismissal.

His lawyer, Chad Hummel, has presented several legal arguments contending that Polanski should be allowed to have his case decided in absentia.

Since filing the request in early December, Hummel has filed many motions, among them a request to have the entire Los Angeles Superior Court disqualified from hearing the case because of bias against Polanski. Superior Court Judge Peter Espinoza, who will hear the matter, and an appellate court rejected that motion.

Polanski, who pleaded guilty to having unlawful sexual intercourse with a 13-year-old girl, fled into exile in France in 1977.

Young Hollywood hits Fashion Week amid tough times

NEW YORK (AP)—Recession, reschmession: The dire state of the economy will not keep Young Hollywood away from New York Fashion Week.

Kristen Bell, Amanda Bynes, Michelle Trachtenberg and the Hilton sisters were among the celebs sitting front row at the Monday afternoon presentation of Jill Stuart's flirty fall collection.

"It's important to keep your head screwed on straight, but I also think it's important to do what you love—and I don't want to give up loving fashion just because maybe I can't buy it right now," said Bell, looking fresh in a floral dress and pointy heels.

Bell, who starred in the 2008 comedy "Forgetting Sarah Marshall" and the cult TV series "Veronica Mars," said she rarely splurges on pricey items.

"I kind of frequently live like I'm in the recession regardless, but that's just because my parents raised me to be very frugal," said Bell, a fan of Jill Stuart's dresses who also sat with Mischa Barton at Miss Sixty.

Actresses Jessica Stroup (the CW's "90210") and Adrianne Palicki (NBC's "Friday Night Lights"), sporting floaty gray frocks, said clothing exchanges are a good way to stay stylish on a budget.

But they also have their spending weaknesses: Palicki said she splurges on food, while Stroup has a thing for jackets.

"I have a million jackets, and if I see an amazing jacket, I will spend too much money on it usually," she said.

Paris Hilton, meanwhile, had no time to answer questions: The socialite, dressed in a fuschia party dress, made a late entrance and talked on her cell phone before the show.

Aubrey O'Day: Fame meets insult

By KATE AURTHUR
(C) 2009, LOS ANGELES TIMES

HOLLYWOOD—When Aubrey O'Day was a child in the Southern California desert city of La Quinta, she was bullied.

The singer-dancer-reality star said she once hid in a dryer in a home economics classroom to escape from kids looking to beat her up.

There was a song, too, that O'Day's tormentors chanted and sang over the middle-school loudspeaker: "`Aubrey, Aubrey, Aubrey O'Day / Biggest slut in the USA.'"

O'Day said: "I felt like I would never be popular. And I would never be liked."

And now?

"Still not liked—but I am popular!"

She's right about that. And on any given day in the blogosphere, the insults hurled at O'Day—who turned 25 last week and is gracing the cover of Playboy magazine's March issue—haven't changed much since the sixth grade.

Using terms of unendearment that, disturbingly, are often a measure of Internet popularity, Perez Hilton regularly calls her a "slut" and a "skank" on his gossip blog.

Over on Dlisted, Michael K has written that she is a "tranny sewer rat" and a "shameless skeezer."

But does anyone know who Aubrey O'Day is?

If you don't read those blogs, or their kin, then you may not, despite the fact that, until recently, she was on a semipopular television show (MTV's "Making the Band") and in a successful band (Danity Kane) for several years. She was recently, and publicly, fired from both.

She even appeared on Broadway in "Hairspray" over the summer, playing the part of Amber Von Tussle.

The celebrity blogosphere, however, does not concern itself with group efforts such as ensemble reality series, bands and musical productions. On the Web, it is individuals who matter, and that is where O'Day has made a solo name for herself—mostly by being photographed in clothes that are provocative or in questionable taste, or both.

On the largely gay male-authored gossip Web sites, she is one of a growing class of citizens who are Famous on the Internet.

Michael K said: "Us blogs, we have to write X amount of posts a day, and there are only so many celebrities, so you kind of just start writing about interesting people."

He continued: "I look at a picture and a character is created. I see a picture of Aubrey, like, on her knees, and a character is born in my head."

Perez Hilton compared O'Day's fame to that of Heidi Montag and Spencer Pratt of "The Hills," who court media attention with every cell in their bodies and are utterly self-aware as they do it.

"And that's one of the reasons why I love her—she's in on the joke and she plays the game," Hilton said. "And it's definitely a game."

O'Day's road to fame-ish-ness began in 2005 when Sean "Diddy" Combs turned his attention, as filmed for the "Making the Band" reality series, toward forming a girl group.

At the time—despite a lifelong love of music and performing that had led to O'Day landing in the finals of Ryan Seacrest's "Be a Star" radio contest—she thought she would be law school-bound after graduating from the University of California, Irvine.

But her mother, Kandy Allen, a lawyer, thought otherwise.

So when Allen saw Combs on CNN talking about his get-out-the-vote efforts, and he mentioned that he was holding auditions for a new group, she passed the information to her daughter.

After doing well at the audition, O'Day moved to New York to live in an apartment with other young female singers competing for a spot in the band—all in front of cameras, of course.

"I wasn't into the reality show aspect in the beginning; I was into working with Puff," she said of Combs.

Whether or not she was into the reality show aspect, it was into her. O'Day proved to be an audience favorite because of her talents (as a dancer, most of all) and her willingness to stand up for herself. She was a clear choice for Combs' group, which was later named Danity Kane.

Aubrey O'Day became a public figure on MTV's "Making the Band." Her dog, Ginger, shares the fame.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

"I was loved the first season," O'Day said. "The second season, the haters came."

On the Internet, O'Day's public image took on a life of its own. One Web site said she looked like "a dried-up, old leather handbag" because she was "skinny and super-tan."

On another, 200 people said they had had sex with her.

"One. I had one boyfriend that I slept with. Lost my virginity in college my junior year," she said. "I think I was mad at first—then I laughed ... The `whore' comments have only escalated from there."

Regardless of what is true, false or just fun, it is a fact that the gossip blogosphere—and much of celebrity culture—is harder on women than on men. The words "slut" and "whore" are thrown around all day long, often as compliments.

"I use them for everything—I use them when it's good, I use them when it's bad," said Michael K. "It doesn't really mean anything to me."

But in the real world, O'Day's image had consequences for her day job. Combs threw her out of Danity Kane. In a filmed meeting with the group that aired in an October 2008 episode, he fired her, and said: "I don't like her energy, I don't like her style and direction where she's going with it, I don't like what she does to the brand when she's wilding out there being overly raunchy, promiscuous."

In the live season finale the following week, Combs—who declined to comment for this article—said: "I just want to work with the young lady that I signed, not the person that fame has made her."

O'Day seemed unhappy when talking about those events.

"I think there was a lot of lies in that season finale," she said. "I think that my character was challenged way too much."

Like when?

"Everybody saying how I've changed, and how I've let fame get to my head. And all these things. It's just all not true."

She added: "My theory on smear pieces is try and win 'em over."

That was in late October, and O'Day had been freshly tossed out of the group, which has since dissolved (as viewers saw when new episodes resumed on Thursday).

In a telephone conversation earlier in February, O'Day said all of her music, TV and other goals "are still in the works."

Given that, the Playboy spread, with the headline on the cover reading, "Aubrey O'Day Breaks Free of Danity Kane (And Her Clothes)," is the most concrete career move she has made since the fall.

"When I was kicked out and moving on, I got the offer and I got it in my terms," she said.

The rumored payout was $500,000, which neither O'Day nor Playboy would confirm.

Christopher Napolitano, editorial director at Playboy, said O'Day had been on their lists for a while, and once she was out of Danity Kane, which had a large teenage and tween audience, she was free to pose for them.

"I think as she strikes out on her own, this is a great way for her to broaden her audience," he said. "And when you are in Playboy and you do something like this? Your name just blows up—you blow up. This is the thing we give people."

O'Day sounded weary at the mention of the word "fame."

"I know that everybody is so obsessed with this idea of fame, and they think that I'm obsessed," she said. "In all honesty, I'm just doing me. You met me—I wore what I wore, I said what I said, I did what I did. I'm not changing my story months later that we've now caught up again.

"People," O'Day said, "will pay attention—or they won't."

Director: Jackie Chan's new film is too violent for China

HONG KONG (AP)—Jackie Chan, the comical kung fu king, is starring in a new movie so violent that its director decided not to release it in mainland China, which doesn't have a film ratings system.

Hong Kong director Derek Yee told The Associated Press on Monday that he considered toning down the violence in "Shinjuku Incident" so it could pass censorship in China, but decided not to because he thought it would hurt the integrity of the movie.

Yee said the $25 million Chinese-language movie, in which Chan plays a refugee who escapes to Japan and becomes a killer for the mob, has scenes that show characters getting a hand chopped off and pierced with knives.

"We tried to cut the violent scenes to meet the requirements of the Chinese market, but producers I invited to watch that version thought it was incomplete," he said.

Yee said Chan, who invested in the movie, agreed with his decision.

Solon So, chief executive of Chan's company, JC Group, confirmed Yee's account.

AP

In this Sept. 3, 2008, file photo Hong Kong movie star Jackie Chan poses for photographers as he awarded the honorary professorship from Savannah College of Art and Design in Hong Kong.

China doesn't have a ratings system, so every movie is released for all audiences. Chinese censors are also wary of subject matter that is politically sensitive, like Tibet or the military crackdown on pro-democracy protesters in Beijing's Tiananmen Square in 1989.

Yee said he wasn't worried about the film's setting of Japan—another sensitive topic in China.

"For us, the problem was just the violence," he said.

Sino-Japanese relations remain tense because of Japan's brutal occupation of China during World War II. The 2005 Hollywood film "Memoirs of a Geisha" was not released on the mainland apparently because the sight of Chinese actresses Zhang Ziyi and Gong Li portraying Japanese entertainers would offend viewers.

Yee's decision also had financial implications because the film is expensive by Asian standards and China is an increasingly important market, where a hit movie can make millions of U.S. dollars.

"Shinjuku Incident" will be released in Hong Kong and Southeast Asia on April 2 and in Japan on May 1.

Timberlake tops GQ's list of '10 Most Stylish Men'

AP

Justin Timberlake poses backstage before the William Rast fall 2009 collection show during Fashion Week Monday, Feb. 16, 2009 in New York.

NEW YORK (AP)—Justin Timberlake wins style props in the March issue of GQ magazine.

The magazine picked the entertainer to lead a list of the "10 Most Stylish Men in America." It singled out Timberlake for his impact on fashion, willingness to take risks and "knack for targeting trends" such as hats, three-piece suits, skinny ties and beards.

Timberlake, who launched his clothing line William Rast several years ago, tells GQ he considers model Kate Moss a style icon because she "could put a barrel on and it would be some sort of statement."

It irks the 28-year-old heartthrob when an entire outfit revolves around a hat, and he'd never wear an argyle sweater vest off the golf course. He prefers to keep it simple, clothes-wise.

Other "Stylish Men" include Kanye West, T.I., Jason Schwartzman, hotelier Andre Balazs and photographer Alexi Lubomirski.

AP

BRITNEY IN WAX

A new waxwork of US singer Britney Spears, holding an MTV Award, is flanked by the members of the Madame Tussauds Dance Troupe wearing previous outfits worn by the singer, in London, Monday, Feb. 16, 2009. Spears joins Christina Aguilera, Amy Winehouse and Justin Timberlake in Madame Tussauds music zone.

Police: Rap producer injured in Ariz. hotel fight

PHOENIX (AP)—A beating has left rap producer Marion 'Suge' Knight hospitalized in Arizona.

Police say it happened early Monday at a private party in a hotel in Scottsdale.

Two men were arrested including a man who said he is the business manager for hip-hop singer Akon.

Scottsdale police spokesman Sgt. Mark Clark says Akon was not present when the scuffle occurred.

Clark says officers arrived and saw a man identified as 38-year-old Robert Carnes Jr. of Bethlehem, Pa., twice punch Knight in the face.

Police booked Carnes and a man identified as 33-year-old Thomas Leon Anderson Jr., of California, on suspicion of assault and disorderly conduct.

Salma Hayek marries in Paris on Valentine's Day

In this Feb. 6, 2008 file photo, actress Salma Hayek and boyfriend PPP CEO Francois-Henri Pinault arrive at "A Night to Benefit Raising Malawi and UNICEF" at United Nations headquarters in New York.

AP

PARIS (AP)—Salma Hayek picked a most romantic time and place to get married: Valentine's Day in Paris. The Mexican-born actress wed French magnate Francois-Henri Pinault in a civil ceremony Saturday at the City Hall in Paris' chic 6th arrondissement, according to an official there.

The wedding was a small affair, said the official, who was speaking on condition of anonymity, in accordance with policy.

Hayek's spokeswoman, Cari Ross, confirmed in an e-mail Monday that the marriage had taken place in Paris Saturday. No further details were provided.

The nuptials followed a rocky romance. The two met in Italy in 2006, announced their engagement and had a baby, Valentina Paloma, in September 2007. Last year they broke off their engagement but made up a few months later.

Hayek, 42, was nominated for an Oscar in 2003 for the film "Frida," the biography of the painter Frida Kahlo, which she produced and starred in. She is one of the executive producers of the hit series "Ugly Betty" and is also the chief executive of Ventanazul, a production company she formed with Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc.

Pinault, 46, is chief executive of the French luxury and retail group PPR SA, which owns high-end labels such as Gucci, Yves Saint Laurent, Balenciaga and Puma.

Neighbor takes advantage of trusting elderly woman

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My elderly mother lives in a rural area. Luckily, she is surrounded by wonderful neighbors who enable her to continue living in her home without assistance. They shop for her, maintain her lawn, do handyman repairs, cook for her and regularly check on her well-being.

Unfortunately, after being discharged from a recent hospital stay, Mama discovered that one of her "trusted" neighbors has been using her credit card to pay their utilities. She is heartsick. She has taken the necessary steps to cancel the credit card, but now is conflicted about the best way to handle such a sensitive issue.

Abby, is there a way for everyone to save face in this situation?

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR

DEAR L.T.N.: I hope you realize that what you have described is more than an embarrassment. It is elder abuse and fraud.

With one glaring exception, your mother's neighbors are angels. However, they have shouldered a responsibility—seeing that your mother is cared for—that really belongs to your family. If you cannot personally see to it that she gets the help she needs to live independently, you should contact your state's Area Agency on Aging or Department of Social Services and arrange for someone who is bonded to do it.

A social worker can help your mother report this matter to the police in a way that she will not be embarrassed and that may help her recover the funds that were stolen.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am at my wits' end with my 9-year-old son, "Zane." After his wrestling practice I tell him to take a shower. He either flat-out refuses or makes excuses to prolong not taking one and then refuses. A few times I have had to personally bathe him. Zane doesn't brush his teeth regularly and barely changes his underwear. I don't know what to do to get him to take care of his personal hygiene. Please give me some advice.

TANYA IN NORTH LIMA, OHIO

DEAR TANYA: One effective way to get a child to live by the rules is to establish them and consistently enforce them. If you are unable to get through to Zane, perhaps his wrestling coach can impress upon him the importance of personal hygiene.

When Zane returns from wrestling practice, inform him that dinner will not be served until he has taken his shower. In the mornings, let him know he is expected to brush his teeth before coming to the breakfast table, and check him out. This may be a stage your son is going through, but if it persists for more than six months, you may need more help than I can give you in this column and you should consult a child psychologist.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: When dining out at an establishment where you order your food at the counter and then they bring your food to the table, is a tip necessary?

Also, when going to coffee shops, tip jars frequently sit on the counter. How obligated should I feel to tip the people behind the counter?

JAMI IN NASHUA, N.H.

DEAR JAMI: Food servers often earn minimum wage, which they supplement with the tips they receive. If your server is efficient and pleasant, you should leave a tip. The usual amount is between 10 and 20 percent.

At a coffee shop where there is a tip jar, assuming that you did not sit down to be served, you should put your spare change into the jar.

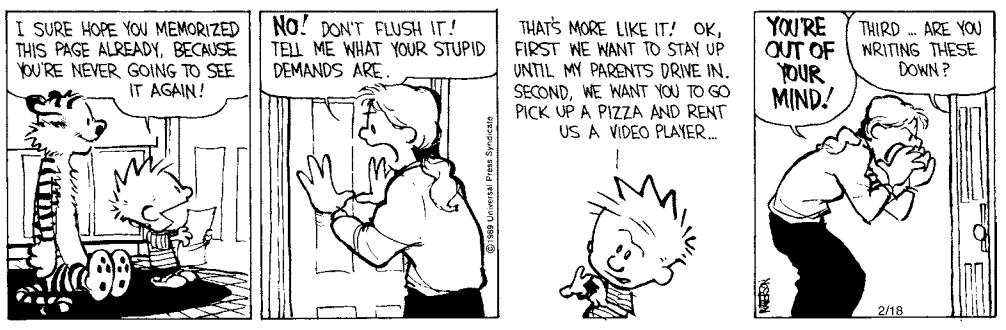
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I SURE HOPE YOU MEMORIZED THIS PAGE ALREADY, BECAUSE YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO SEE IT AGAIN!
NO! DON'T FLUSH IT! TELL ME WHAT YOUR STUPID DEMANDS ARE.
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THAT'S MORE LIKE IT! OK, FIRST WE WANT TO STAY UP UNTIL MY PARENTS DRIVE IN. SECOND, WE WANT YOU TO GO PICK UP A PIZZA AND RENT US A VIDEO PLAYER...
YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND!
THIRD ... ARE YOU WRITING THESE DOWN?
2/18

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

♪ DUM DEE DUM DUMMM... DUM DEE DEEE...
JIM DAVIS 2-18
www.garfield.com
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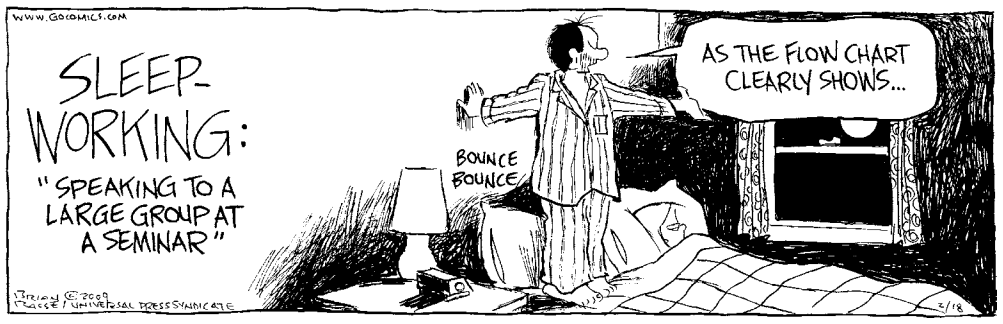
♪ LAH-LA LAAAH LAA H-LAH-L-
OH, HI
GOT A LITTLE TOO INTO THE 'HOLD' SONG
Distributed by Universal Press Syndicate

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset



The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Lawyers' org.
4 Bob or Elizabeth
8 Lather
12 Pistol
13 "Metamorphoses" poet
14 Contemporary coin
15 "Guinness Book" suffix
16 Quarantine facility
18 Filch
20 Unruly group
21 Apprehends
24 Redden
28 Jesus' home
32 Birthright barterer
33 "— Got a Secret"
34 Knapsack part
36 Prior night
37 Collections
39 Risked
41 Baghdad resident
43 Make (one's way)
44 Multipurpose truck
46 Refuge
50 Mideast region
55 Sapporo sash
56 Culture medium
57 — and void
58 Suitable
59 Info
60 With skill
61 Fool

DOWN
1 Forever, it seems
2 Bankrupt
3 Initial stake
4 Moolah
5 Eggs
6 Claiborne of fashion
7 Dutch cheese
8 Weak
9 No longer chic
10 Illustrations
11 Cattle call
17 Lowe or Morrow
19 Santa —, Calif.
22 "Little Women" woman
23 Milkshake insert
25 Secondhand
26 Rescue
27 Colored
28 Unless (Latin)
29 State with certainty
30 Catherine — -Jones
31 Visibility hindrance
35 Magnificent array
38 Uncool
40 Vitamin amt.
42 "— Impossible"
45 Italian volcano
47 Parlor piece
48 Wading bird
49 Perches
50 Wander about
51 Past
52 Use a ray-gun
53 Massage
54 Under the weather

Solution time: 21 mins.

G	A	F	F	■	S	T	A	B	■	G	O	D
O	L	I	O	■	A	R	I	A	■	I	R	E
T	A	X	R	E	T	U	R	N	■	L	E	E
■	■	■	K	N	E	E	■	T	U	T	O	R
S	I	R	E	D	■	■	E	A	S	E	■	■
H	O	E	D	■	F	A	X	M	O	D	E	M
E	W	E	■	F	A	R	I	S	■	G	P	A
M	A	X	E	R	N	S	T	■	B	E	E	N
■	■	■	A	L	E	S	■	■	O	L	D	E	N
G	I	M	M	E	■	■	A	O	N	E	■	■
A	N	I	■	W	A	X	P	O	E	T	I	C
T	O	N	■	A	R	E	A	■	P	A	P	A
E	N	E	■	Y	E	L	L	■	S	P	O	T

Yesterday's answer 2-18

1	2	3	■	4	5	6	7	■	8	9	10	11
12			■	13				■	14			
15			■	16				17				
18			19		■	■	20			■	■	■
■	■	■	21		22	23	■	24		25	26	27
28	29	30					31	■	32			
33			■	34				35	■	36		
37			38	■	39				40			
41				42	■	43				■	■	■
■	■	■	44		45	■	■	46		47	48	49
50	51	52				53	54		■	55		
56				■	57				■	58		
59				■	60				■	61		

STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Molly Ringwald, 41; Dr. Dre, 44; Matt Dillon, 45; John Travolta, 55

Happy Birthday: Not everyone has as innovative and original a mind as you. Open up about your ideas and plans and set the pace for others. You are the one to make reforms and to standardize what's going on in your community. Be prepared to lead. Your numbers are 4, 10, 18, 24, 29, 43, 48

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Promote love and good times. The encounters you have had with different people you've helped out will be honored now, so do not hesitate to ask for help or to share your plans. An unexpected surprise will cause alterations. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): It's no one's business what you are doing with whom and, by being vocal, you will invite opposition. Don't make promises without knowing what you will get in return. A professional change will be dependent on the decisions you make now. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Make the changes that will help you get ahead. You can be a leader who makes a difference so don't hold back. If someone questions you, address that person and continue confidently down the path you have chosen. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): You may have to be a little more creative with your money but that doesn't mean you should invest in some fast-cash scheme. Don't fear trying something new or pushing for advancement. Utilize your skills to the fullest. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You have what it takes to sway people to think the same way you do. If you can form a group, you will be a driving force, accomplishing what you set out to do. A partnership could unravel your plans. ✪✪✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Keep your emotions out of your decision-making if you don't want to make a mistake. Hard work, lots of detail and not letting others meddle will determine the outcome of whatever you are trying to achieve. ✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You have positioned yourself well so don't let anyone cause you to question your choices. A unique approach to life, love and creativity will bring others to your side, giving you the strength to follow through with your plans. ✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Criticism will discourage you and can be avoided if you are diligent and perfect what you are pursuing. It's not worth the risk of losing the confidence of someone who can help you in the future. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): You have to take action based on what you feel is right, not what someone else is telling you. Have faith in who you are and what you can do. An imaginative approach to some of your old projects can turn things around drastically now. ✪✪✪

CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Taking chances is for amateurs who don't know how to play the game. You can stay in control by keeping things as stable, simple and safe as possible. Change will come when the time is right. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You will build strength of character by pursuing things that are good for you—like a fitness regime and healthy diet. Learning will lead to a whole new world of prosperity and increased self-esteem. Show confidence in all that you do. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): It's time to venture into talks with someone who can contribute to what you are working on. A past partnership that was shaky or ended on bad terms needs to be readdressed and reestablished in order to finish what you began. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are outgoing, kind and willing to help the underdog. You have great ideas and are a thinker and a doer. You are unafraid to venture into unfamiliar territory.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

		8	7	5	1	6		
	3						2	
1								
4								
8				4	3	2	9	7
6								8
3								6
	5						4	
		1	8	2	6	9		

Difficulty Level ★★★ 2/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

4	3	1	6	7	2	9	5	8
9	6	5	3	4	8	1	2	7
2	8	7	1	9	5	6	4	3
3	9	8	5	1	4	7	6	2
1	5	6	8	2	7	4	3	9
7	2	4	9	6	3	5	8	1
5	1	2	4	3	9	8	7	6
8	7	9	2	5	6	3	1	4
6	4	3	7	8	1	2	9	5

Difficulty Level ★★ 2/17

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

HADRIAN'S WALL **Solution: 7 letters**

D	N	E	S	L	L	A	W	Y	L	P	P	U	S	S
H	U	N	N	U	M	A	I	L	L	I	W	N	I	A
O	E	O	M	U	T	I	P	O	T	S	R	O	C	N
D	C	T	M	E	G	A	T	I	R	E	H	I	A	D
N	A	S	E	G	E	D	U	N	U	M	P	T	L	S
E	A	E	E	P	R	O	T	E	C	T	V	A	G	T
W	N	M	H	N	O	I	G	E	L	I	W	C	S	O
L	A	I	O	N	U	N	A	T	N	S	A	I	S	N
L	A	L	H	R	E	V	S	D	O	N	D	F	O	E
I	T	N	K	W	A	E	O	D	U	W	N	I	R	N
S	L	R	N	L	D	B	R	A	T	M	E	T	C	G
U	I	(F)	L	A	A	I	L	G	P	R	F	R	O	L
L	U	A	(R)	L	B	A	O	A	O	E	E	O	R	A
U	B	T	A	(U)	E	N	Y	T	S	B	D	F	I	N
A	N	A	I	R	(T)	E	P	E	T	R	R	O	A	D

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Aballava, Alauna, Aulus, Banna, Berm, Birdoswald, Built, Coria, Corstopitum, Cross, Defend, England, Fortification, Gate, Glacis, Greenhead, Heritage, Hunnum, Legion, Limestone, Outpost, Petriana, Pons, Protect, Road, Roman, Sandstone, Segedunum, Sill, Supply, Tower, Trade, Turf, Tyne, UNESCO, Vindobala, Walk, Wallsend, Whin, William

Yesterday's Answer: Devices

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Saipan Tribune

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION, PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM
P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950
HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE

JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT
PROMOTIONAL & OPEN COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION ANNOUNCEMENT

It is the policy of the Board of Education, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, that the Public School Personnel System shall be applied and administered according to the principles of equal employment opportunity as defined by the Northern Marianas Commonwealth Public Law 6 - 10, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, political affiliation or belief, marital status, handicap or place of origin. Applicants for this position must be a U.S. Citizen or be eligible and authorized to work in the U.S., including the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Announcement No: **PSS-072-2007** Application & Employment Type: **Non-Certified**
(Amendment/Re-Announcement III)
Position Title: **Procurement & Supply Officer**
Pay Level/Step: **35 / 01-12** Per Annum Salary: **$28,807.51 - $49,266.21**
Opening Date: **February 10, 2009** Closing Date: **February 25, 2009**
Location: **PSS – Procurement & Supply Office, Administrative Services Division**

Benefits: Salary Commensurate with qualifications and experience, plus excellent benefits (including Life Insurance, Retirement Benefits, and Paid Leave/Holidays

Minimum Requirements: **Graduation from a U.S. accredited college or university with a Bachelor's degree and at least six (6) years of procurement and supply work experience or related work experience, Or Master's degree and four (4) years work experience.**

***Detailed job description with qualification requirements can be obtained at PSS Human Resources Office at the 3rd Retirement Building, Capitol Hill, or download it online www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources**

INTERESTED APPLICANTS MAY OBTAIN A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION WITH QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS AND APPLICATION FORMS AT THE PSS HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE AT THE 3rd RETIREMENT BUILDING, CAPITOL HILL. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MUST BE ATTACHED TO COMPLETE APPLICATION FORMS: (1) COPY OF DIPLOMA/DEGREE, (2) TRANSCRIPTS, (3) POLICE CLEARANCE (FROM PLACE OF RESIDENCE FOR PAST SIX0 MONTHS), (4) VERIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT LETTER, (5) RESUME, AND (6) TEACHING CERTIFICATE (IF APPLICABLE).COMPLETED APPLICATIONS AND REQUIRED DOCUMENTS MAY BE SUBMITTED TO THE HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE OR MAILED TO: CNMI PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM, ATTN: HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICE, RETIREMENT BUILDING; THIRD FLOOR, P.O. BOX 501370 CK, SAIPAN, MP 96950, and TEL. #. (670) 237-3051, FAX # (670) 664-3707. ALSO VISIT http://www.pss.cnmi.mp/humanresources ON THE WORLDWIDE WEB.

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235- NEWS

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Saipan Tribune also offers a Super Saver Package—a complete 7-day run on both print and online edition, for as low as $25 per 3 liner ad for garage sales, apartment rentals, help wanted, auto and more. You can choose from any of below packages that fits your budget.

ADS (7DAYS)	COMBO (PRINT AND ONLINE)
• 3-Liner	$25
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Classified Ads

Ads must be submitted before 12 noon 2 days prior to publication date

Saturday Issue:
- *Saipan Tribune:* All ads placed Friday before 12 noon will come out Saturday issue and anything placed thereafter will be published on Monday issue.

CANCELLATION

Classified Ads

Cancellations should be made before 12 noon of the day prior to date of publication.

REFUNDS

Refunds will only be made if cancellation deadlines are met. No refunds will be made once ad is already printed.

CHECK YOUR ADS

Saipan Tribune will not be responsible for errors after the first day of publication. Errors should be called in before noon of the issue date. *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

ADVERTISING POLICY

All advertising in the *Saipan Tribune* are subject to applicable rate sheet, copies of which are available from the Advertising Sales Department (please call 235-8747, 235-2769 or 235-6397). All ads will be subject to approval prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit, refuse, reject or cancel any ad at any time. Also, *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to place ads under proper headings and to revise copy when necessary.

No pot charge for swimmer Phelps after photo

COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP)—Now that Michael Phelps won't face drug charges, he can try to distance himself from a photo that showed the Olympian smoking a marijuana pipe.

A South Carolina sheriff decided Monday after a highly publicized investigation that he simply didn't have enough physical evidence to charge the 14-time gold medalist.

"We had a photo and we had him saying he was sorry for his inappropriate behavior. That behavior could've been going to a party," Richland County Sheriff Leon Lott said.

"He never said, 'I smoked marijuana.' He never confessed that," the sheriff said.

Phelps, who lost a major endorsement and faces a three-month competition suspension in the fallout from the photo, said he was ready to put the ordeal behind him.

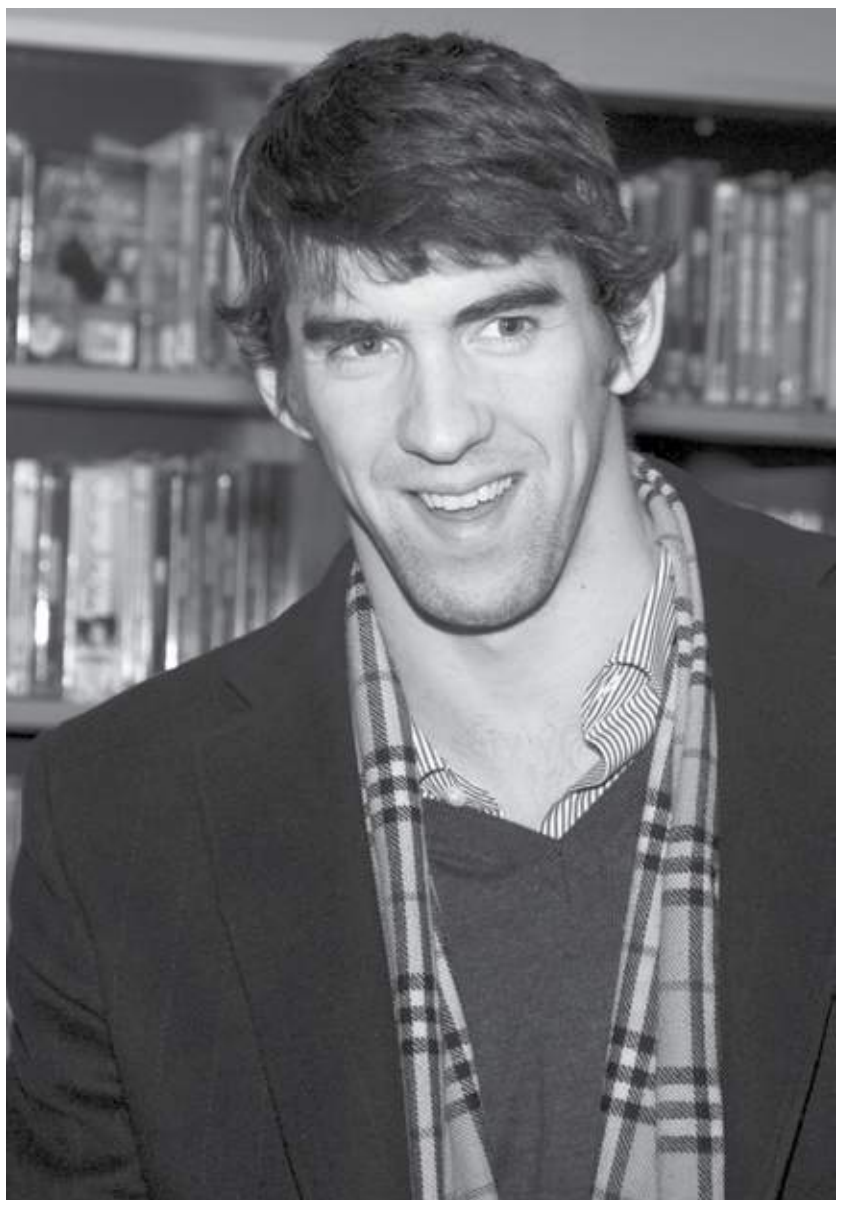
"For me, it's all about recognizing that I used bad judgment and it's a mistake I won't make again," the swimmer said in a statement. "For young people especially—be careful about the decisions you make. One bad decision can really hurt you and the people you care about. I really appreciate the support my family and fans have shown me."

The photo showed Phelps smoking from a marijuana pipe at a party in November when he visited the University of South Carolina.

Lott said authorities seized the marijuana water pipe, known as a bong, in the photo during the investigation but couldn't prove Phelps had smoked from it.

Holding a bong is not a crime, he said.

"They're sold in stores. We're kind of sending a double message," Lott said. "You can buy rolling papers at any convenience store in the world, but we're telling kids not to smoke dope."



AP

In this Dec. 11, 2008 file photo, Michael Phelps signs his book "No Limits" at the Borders Wall Street bookstore in New York.

Phelps didn't get through the scandal unscathed, though. USA Swimming suspended Phelps for three months in the wake of the photo, and Kellogg Co. said it would not renew its endorsement deal with him.

And while the swimmer won't face any charge, eight people were arrested during the investigation when a small amount of marijuana was found in raids on two homes. The bong was found in a car.

Seven people have been charged with simple possession of marijuana, which carries a maximum penalty of 30 days in jail or a $575 fine. Another person was arrested for driving under suspension.

The sheriff, known for his tough stance on drug crimes, said ignoring the photo would have sent a message of tolerance.

Phelps' "bad decision and the highly published photo placed me and the Richland County Sheriff's Department in a no-win situation. Ignore it and be criticized or address it and be criticized. I chose to do what was right," said Lott, a Democrat who was first elected in 1996.

Lott rose from patrol officer to captain of the narcotics division in the early 1990s. He was well-known in the county for wearing stylish suits like the drug agents on "Miami Vice" and driving a Porsche seized from a drug dealer.

The sheriff said the investigation involved two narcotics officers that logged 25 hours over about a week. He said the house where the November party took place and another suburban home near Columbia had previously been investigated for drugs.

His investigation was criticized in newspaper editorials, on talk shows and by defense attorneys who questioned whether the sheriff was being overzealous because of Phelps' celebrity status.

Even if the sheriff had the evidence needed, he acknowledged he could not force Phelps to return to South Carolina to face a misdemeanor possession charge.

One of the attorneys representing the three students arrested said the accused were all in their early 20s. Attorney Dick Harpootlian said the police kicked in the doors with guns drawn during the raids and found less than a cigarette's worth of marijuana in the house where the party was held. The other raid netted about four or five cigarettes worth, Harpootlian said.

The lawyer expects his clients to either have the charge dismissed or for them to get a conditional discharge, which allows an offender to avoid punishment as long as they comply with certain conditions for six months and stay out of trouble.

"We hope these kids are treated the same as any other kids," he said.

The photo surfaced in the British tabloid News of the World on Feb. 1. The swimmer, who won a record eight gold medals at the Beijing Games, never disputed its authenticity.

Lott said the person who took the photo sold it for $100,000. He would not identify the photographer or say how he knew the amount.

The party occurred nearly three months after the Olympics while Phelps was taking a break from training.

This isn't the first embarrassing episode for Phelps after an Olympic triumph. In 2004, a few months removed from winning six gold and two bronze medals in Athens, the swimmer was arrested on a drunken driving charge at age 19. He pleaded guilty and apologized for the mistake.

Wall of teammates will join Rodriguez on Tuesday

TAMPA, Fla. (AP)—Alex Rodriguez will have a thick pinstriped wall of New York Yankees looking on during his news conference Tuesday, with teammates coalescing around A-Rod following his admission that he used banned drugs.

The Yankees still didn't know how many specifics of his drug use Rodriguez planned to divulge when he speaks in the tent behind the third-base stands at Steinbrenner Field.

"I don't think it's necessary in my eyes that he answer every detail," manager Joe Girardi said Monday.

While Andy Pettitte spoke from the heart during his news conference a year ago admitting use of human growth hormone, the image-conscious Rodriguez appears to be formulating his strategy surrounded by an entourage large enough to fill a television series.

Even before Sports Illustrated reported on its Web site Feb. 7 that Rodriguez tested positive for a pair of steroids during baseball's anonymous survey in 2003, Team A-Rod included agent Scott Boras and his staff, manager Guy Oseary and the William Morris Agency.

He has retained James E. Sharp, a lawyer who represented Pettitte and Sammy Sosa before Congress and then-President George W. Bush in front of a federal prosecutor. Rodriguez also brought in Outside Eyes, a media strategy and crisis management company based in Newport Beach, Calif., that includes communications specialists from Republican campaigns.

While Yankees officials were in charge of Pettitte's news conference, the team was uncertain who would run Tuesday's session, scheduled for live television transmission by the team's YES Network, which will provide its feed to other networks. It will be a must-see event for many, if not most, of the Yankees.

"It's part of playing here. Everything is somewhat magnified to a certain degree being here, and just some things you've got to deal with," said Pettitte, who planned to attend.

Pettitte was joined at his news conference in the same tent last February by Yankees captain Derek Jeter, Jorge Posada and Mariano Rivera—"like brothers to me"—who joined him on World Series champions. Rodriguez, a three-time MVP who is on news and gossip pages in New York as much as the sports section, figures to draw a far higher percentage of teammates.

"I don't think it's window dressing," Girardi said. "I think it's out of their hearts and their feelings for Alex and them wanting to stand behind him and help him through this situation."

Stopping by the clubhouse to drop off gear, Mark Teixeira said he planned to go. The first-year Yankee was A-Rod's teammate on the 2003 Texas Rangers.

"When I see him tomorrow, I'm going to give him a big hug and just tell him I'm there for him. I'm going to be a teammate and a friend if he needs one," Teixeira said.

Girardi planned to speak with Rodriguez before the event "just to look him in the eyes and see how he's doing."

While Pettitte made his news conference his first public appearance after admitting his HGH use to a congressional committee, Rodriguez responded to the SI report by conducting a Feb. 9 interview with ESPN. He admitted using banned drugs while playing for Texas from 2001-03 but sidestepped saying exactly what he used, how often he used, where he obtained banned drugs, whether they were injected and whether he used them during the offseason.

Some columnists criticized ESPN for not pinning him down.

Pettitte, in contrast, went into great detail.

"It didn't matter what lawyers said or whatever, I was going to get it all out," he recalled Monday.

Girardi could see merits in both approaches. The stakes are higher because Rodriguez is 12th on the career home run list with 553 and trails leader Barry Bonds by 209.

"It's going to be different, I'm sure, just because of the magnitude of who Alex is. I think the record that he's chasing has something to do with it, too," Girardi said. "Would he like to probably put it behind him tomorrow? Yes. But I don't think that's realistic."

A cartoon of a bulked-up Rodriguez signing autographs for bulked-up kids is on this week's cover of The New Yorker. He has been the subject of numerous jokes on late-night television.

He is the most prominent player to admit having used performance-enhancing substances.

"A lot of people think that, you know, this is going to tear the team apart," Teixeira said. "I think it's going to bring the team together."

MLB BRIEFS

Ortiz wants season-long ban for steroid users

FORT MYERS, Fla. (AP)—David Ortiz says players who test positive for steroids should be suspended from baseball for the whole season. The Red Sox designated hitter says the way to clean up the game is through testing and not by taking players to court. Houston Astros shortstop Miguel Tejada pleaded guilty last Wednesday to misleading Congress about performance-enhancing drug use in baseball. Ortiz also says he feels fine after wrist problems last season limited him to 23 homers. He says he took a few months off from swinging and felt a little strange when he started doing it again. But now he says he feels fine. Ortiz was at Boston's spring training camp Monday, the reporting day for position players. The first full squad workout is Wednesday.

Astros' Hampton sent home with irregular heartbeat

KISSIMMEE, Fla. (AP)—Astros left-hander Mike Hampton returned to Houston on Monday after a routine physical turned up a minor irregularity in his heartbeat. Hampton was to be examined by team physician Dr. Jim Muntz before undergoing a procedure to correct the heartbeat with an electrical current. The Astros hope to have him back in camp Thursday. "From what I understand, it's not an uncommon condition and it's not an uncommon procedure he's going to go through," general manager Ed Wade said. "Other than travel time back and forth between here and Houston, we don't expect him to miss any time." The 36-year-old Hampton has had a hard time staying healthy the past four years. He missed most of 2005 with five stints on the disabled list, then was out all of 2006 (elbow surgery) and all of 2007 (torn flexor tendon). He has 141 career victories, but just eight in the past four years. Astros manager Cecil Cooper said Hampton has thrown the ball well so far in camp. He wasn't scheduled to throw Monday after consecutive days of bullpen sessions, and left camp without speaking to reporters.

Johnson wins Pebble without hitting a final shot

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (AP)—Dustin Johnson walked out the door and into the rain Monday morning, still expecting to show up on the first tee with a four-shot lead to play the final round at Pebble Beach.

He won not with a big drive or a clutch putt, rather a phone call.

"It was Michael Letzig, one of my buddies out here," Johnson said. "I was walking out the door to go have breakfast. He called to congratulate me and I didn't know what he was talking about."

Some 40 hours after hitting his last shot of the tournament, Johnson won the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am when rain washed out the final round for the second straight day.

Pebble Beach received nearly 1 1/2 inches of rain, enough to create a tiny river in one fairway and produce puddles on most of the greens. It was the first rain-shortened tournament on the PGA Tour in nearly three years, and the first 54-hole event at Pebble Beach since the late Payne Stewart also hit the winning shot on Saturday in 1999.

AP

Dustin Johnson holds up his trophy on the 18th green of Pebble Beach golf links after winning the AT&T Pebble Beach National Pro-Am golf tournament in Pebble Beach, Calif., Monday, Feb. 16, 2009.

And it was historic for at least one reason.

"I've never won a tournament in tennis shoes," said Johnson, who came to the course to collect his trophy, thank the rain-soaked volunteers and grasp the timing of his great week, even if he only got in three rounds.

The victory was the second in his last nine starts, and it puts him in the conversation with a growing cast of rising stars. The 24-year-old Johnson joins Anthony Kim as the only players under 25 with multiple PGA Tour victories.

He moved up to No. 45 in the world, putting him into the 64-man field at the Accenture Match Play Championship next week. More importantly—at least for a guy who grew up less than an hour away from Augusta National—it earned Johnson a trip to the Masters. He has had a few offers to play the course, but each time turned it down.

"I just really wanted to be in the tournament before I went and played it," he said.

Johnson finished at 15-under 201 and earned $1.098 million. The winning round came at Poppy Hills on Saturday, when Johnson overpowered the five par 5s with birdies on all of them—he had three eagle attempts—and shot a 67. That gave him a four-shot lead over Mike Weir, who would have been playing in the final group at Pebble for the second time in four years.

None of this would have seemed possible to Johnson eight years ago.

According to a story published two weeks ago in Golf World magazine, Johnson was suspended from his high school golf team for skipping classes as he struggled to cope with his parents' divorce.

Then came an incident that nearly cost him much more.

Intimidated by Steve Gillian, a menacing older brother of one of his friends, Johnson was among five kids involved in the break-in of a house, where someone took a gun. Johnson says he stayed in the car during the burglary, but he was there. According to appellate court documents, Johnson then was persuaded, reluctantly, to buy bullets for the gun.

Later that month in 2001, Gillian was charged with murder after shooting the victim multiple times in the head. Because of the loose connection to the crime, Johnson had to pay restitution for the theft and agree to testify at the murder trail.

Gillian is serving life without parole.

"I always knew I wanted to play on the PGA Tour," Johnson said. "Eight years ago, however long ago that was, I couldn't see myself being here. But after I got through all that stuff, I went on to play golf at Coastal Carolina. And coach (Allen) Terrell helped me a bunch."

The victory at Pebble comes nearly three weeks after the Probation, Pardon and Parole Services Board of South Carolina granted Johnson a full pardon relating to his guilty plea in the second-degree burglary case.

And with his second tour victory, Johnson is ready to see how far he can go.

It took Johnson only 36 starts to record his second tour victory, compared with 42 tournaments for Kim and 87 for Camilo Villegas.

"Obviously, I've proved myself to be just as good as they are," Johnson said. "Anthony is a great player. He's a good friend of mine, and he's done great things in the last two years. Just to be mentioned with them is an honor. I'm just looking forward to the rest of the year and proving myself a little more."

For all the dramatic scenery and rich history at Pebble Beach, this was among the more anticlimactic wins.

Johnson won at Turning Stone last October with birdies on the last two holes. This time, he won on his way to breakfast.

It was the sixth time in the last 50 years that rain forced a 54-hole tournament at Pebble Beach, and that doesn't include 1996 when the tournament was canceled. Stewart had a one-shot lead in 1999 when rain washed out the final round Sunday, and the forecast was so ominous that tour officials called it off that day.

"A win is a win," Johnson said. "Obviously, I would have liked to have played either yesterday or today. Unfortunately, the weather wouldn't allow it. But I'm pleased with my play the first three rounds. I'm very confident in myself and what I can do."

NBA to resume with Bryant harboring title hopes

PHOENIX (AP)—Their triumphant reunion complete, Shaquille O'Neal revealed that Kobe Bryant let him keep the All-Star MVP trophy they shared.

Bryant doesn't need it. He's got his eyes on a much bigger prize.

His Los Angeles Lakers bring the best record in the league into the second half of the season, giving Bryant a realistic chance to finally win a championship without O'Neal.

"We hit the ground off and running," Bryant said after leading the West to a 146-119 victory over the East on Sunday. "It was a fun weekend. As soon as I leave this podium, it is time to get back down to business. Looking forward to it."

O'Neal headed off to a more uncertain future. His Phoenix Suns fired coach Terry Porter on Monday, and were expected to remain busy dismantling their team before Thursday's trade deadline.

Amare Stoudemire, O'Neal's All-Star teammate, is the most prominent name atop the rumor mill. But as last year proved, it's not necessarily the biggest stars that make the biggest difference.

The final piece to a championship puzzle began to take shape during the All-Star break, when Boston's Big Three used its trip to New Orleans to put a full-court press on P.J. Brown.

Brown eventually agreed to join Kevin Garnett, Paul Pierce and Ray Allen in Boston, and became a key reserve on the team that won the Celtics' 17th NBA championship.

Plenty of eyes will be on Boston to see if the Celtics can make a similar upgrade this season.

"I see Boston maybe going to get somebody before it's all said and done and helping their bench out," Cleveland All-Star LeBron James said.

The Celtics could be motivated to make a move after failing a pair of high-profile tests before the break in home losses to the Lakers and San Antonio Spurs.

They've been linked to Stephon Marbury, the banished Knicks guard who is trying to secure his escape from New York. Or, they could decide to stick with what they —which isn't bad. Boston's 44-11 record was just percentage points behind the Lakers' 42-10 mark for best in the league.

"I think we have the pieces necessary to win another championship," said Pierce, the MVP of last season's NBA finals. "Teams are always looking to improve. If there is a way to do it, they will do it. If not, I think we are still one of the best teams in the NBA."

James' Cavaliers, neck-and-neck with the Celtics in the East, also might consider a move, as could any other title hopeful hoping there's one more part available to separate itself from the pack.

Teams like Phoenix and Houston, disappointments thus far who expected to be among the contenders out West, have to decide if they keep together or break apart their underperforming clubs.

But teams looking to strike the big deal could be wary from what happened last year, when big names such as O'Neal and Jason Kidd were traded to contenders before the deadline, yet their teams couldn't make it past the first round.

Houston made a splash with its summer acquisition of Ron Artest, but hasn't been able to keep him, Yao Ming and Tracy McGrady healthy long enough to build any type of momentum.

"A good team is not built in one day," Yao said. "We are not like the Celtics with a Big Three. I think we will need some time."

Plenty of West teams are in the same position. New Orleans, Utah and Dallas also have been inconsistent, but all hope they can get healthy and take off like the Rockets did last year, winning 22 straight games to vault up the playoff ladder.

"We were struggling and it was a little up and down, but the good thing is other teams were, too," Mavericks All-Star Dirk Nowitzki said. "If you look at New Orleans, lost some tough games. Utah, (Carlos) Boozer has been out for a couple months. They lost some games. Phoenix is struggling.

"There are a lot of teams that are up and down a little bit, and I think that's what helps us. I still think we are in a great position to have a great playoff run."

Maybe so, but things seem set up for a marquee final four of Celtics-Cavaliers and Lakers-Spurs. That would offer the potential of a championship rematch, or perhaps a duel between James and Bryant, the leading MVP candidates.

The Lakers would like their chances against anyone. Even after losing center Andrew Bynum to a knee injury that could keep him out until the playoffs, Los Angeles won at Boston and Cleveland during a 6-0 road trip before the break.

"We want to win another championship," Bryant said. "We have a good team, have the team to do it. That's our goal."

Suns fire Porter after 4 months on the job

PHOENIX (AP)—The Phoenix Suns have fired coach Terry Porter, just four months into his first season with the club and the sputtering team barely in playoff contention. Assistant Alvin Gentry was appointed interim coach.

Phoenix (28-23) lost five of eight going into the All-Star break and trails Utah by one game for the eighth and final playoff spot in the West.

Gentry promised a return to the fast-paced style that best utilizes the team's talent, particularly the skills of playmaker Steve Nash.

"We are who we are and I think we have to go back to trying to establish a breakneck pace like we've had in the past," Gentry said at a news conference announcing his promotion.

The Suns are the eighth team to fire a coach this season, meaning more than one-quarter of the league's coaches are gone at the All-Star break.

This marks the second time Porter has been fired as an NBA coach. He was let go by the Milwaukee Bucks in 2005 after two seasons.

"I hired Terry because I believed in him. He's got a ton of integrity and dignity and class, and he's got a great work ethic," general manager Steve Kerr said. "I hired him because I believed he was the best man for the job."

But Kerr said he probably underestimated the difficulty of the transition from Mike D'Antoni's loose, high-speed style of play.

"I think we still can make this a very successful season," Kerr said. "This was a move I think we had to make in order to give our team the best chance for success."

Porter was in the first year of a three-year deal worth about $6 million to replace Mike D'Antoni, who left after four highly successful seasons to coach the New York Knicks.

D'Antoni is a coach who lets his players run and shoot, and maybe play defense once in a while. It was Kerr's insistence on emphasizing defense that led, in large part, to D'Antoni's departure. Porter wanted a defense-oriented team in the tough mold of the Detroit Pistons.

It was a bad fit.

Aqua rallies past World Resort, Hyatt wins

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Gil Gapor drilled 13 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter to lift Aqua Resort Club to a 91-89 victory over Saipan World Resort in the 2009 Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League Monday night at the Tinian Municipal Gymnasium.

It was Aqua's second win in as many games after debuting with an 85-73 triumph over Asia Pacific Hotel, Inc. two weeks ago.

World Resort failed to make a follow up on its 72-68 win over TDHC in the league opener wasting a nine-point lead going into the last two minutes of its game against Aqua.

World Resort led by four, 73-69, entering the payoff period when Gapor anchored Aqua's recovery. His back-to-back 3-point plays in the closing seconds of the match allowed Aqua to steal the win.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Best Player of the Game Gil Gapor, third right, receives his prize from Club Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino after leading Aqua Resort Club to a 91-89 win over Saipan World Resort in the 2009 Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League Monday night at the Tinian Municipal Gymnasium.

Jun Estolas top-scored for Aqua with 22 markers, while aside from Gapor, three others also contributed double figures. Big men Gyles Ruluked and Kelvin Fitial chipped in 19 and 13 points, respectively, while Ziddy Johanes added 11.

Wowie Abuel led World Resort's losing cause making 28 points, but was held to six markers in the payoff canto.

Banjo Basila and Dennis Vinas combined for 48 points, while Kae Bernardo had 12, but was scoreless in the fourth.

In the second game, Hyatt also eked out a come-from-behind win over APHI, 93-90.

Hyatt trailed at the end of the third quarter, 60-69, but outscored APHI in the fourth, 33-21, to escape with a three-point win.

Chris Arreza exploded for 19 big points in the fourth period to give Hyatt a 2-0 start in the competition. Arreza finished with a game-high 31 points.

APHI dropped to a 0-2 record despite getting 31 markers from Elmer Esdrelon and 24 points from new recruit Bonbon Cadagat.

Meanwhile, league coordinators thanked the following for supporting the competition: Budweiser, I-Connect, Northern Marianas Bartender Association, TDHC Club, and Monster Pizza.

First Game

Hyatt 93 – Arreza 31, Lizama 25, Cruz 17, Mendoza 10, Umali 4, Berline 2.

APHI 90 – Esdrelon 31, Cadagat 24, Manglona 10, Opone 10, Carino 9, Galag 2, Sabino 2, Usi 2.

Scoring by quarters: 20-31, 39-49, 60-69, 93-90.

Second Game

Aqua 91 – Estolas 22, Gapor 21, Ruluked 19, Fitial 13, Johanes 11, Mi. Achas 5, Acosta 2.

Saipan World Resort 89 – Abuel 28, Basila 25, Vinas 22, Bernardo 12, Scinieder 2.

Scoring by quarters: 16-23, 38-56, 69-73, 91-89.

SCHULER

From Page 28

vice game.

"I did my best in this seesaw battle, but he got the breaks in the end and I could not keep up with his big serves. It was great playing against a former collegiate player," Race added.

Joining Schuler in the champions' list in the tournament supported by Department of Public Health's Wise Women Village Project, were Lydia Tan, Carl Dela Cruz, Rafael and Emily Jones, Amy Arenovski, Peter Loyola, Neghar Rastguiy, Lila Mailman, Dong Min Lee, and Benjie Decena.

Tan prevailed in the round-robin women's open singles with her 3-0 record. Kinumi Tanaguchi and Sakiko Eda finished second and third, respectively.

Dela Cruz ruled the 17-player field boys' 10-and-under division after beating Colin Ramsey in the finals, 6-3. Kennedy Izuka took third place.

Siblings Rafael and Emily Jones dominated the boys' 14-and-under and girls' 10-and-under divisions, respectively. Rafael won over perennial rival Christian Miller in the finals, 8-2. Jake Lee defeated Chris Cajigan in the battle for third, 8-3.

Emily topped Sakura Imaya in the girls' 10-and-under finals, 6-1. Gabrielle Race settled for third after whipping Julia Ishikawa, 6-0.

Arenovski pulled off an 8-5 upset over top seed Ilia Corella in the girls' 14-and-under finals. Rastguiy finished third after whipping Alina Ishikawa in the consolation match, 8-3.

Neghar teamed up with Loyola in the mixed up doubles and they won in the finals over Nicholas Son and Jean Bracken, 8-6.

Mailman took the girls' 18-and-under title after a clean 3-0 slate in the round-robin tournament. Mailman beat Thea Minor in the third game, 8-4, sending the latter to second place. Thea's older sister, Theecel finished third.

Decena secured the boys' 18-and-under plum after outclassing Woo Suk Chang in the finals, 8-4. Nathan Nutting settled for third after downing Sung Hoon Ham, 9-8.

The men's 40-and-above singles title went to Dong Min Lee, who prevailed over Richard Brostrom in the finals, 8-0. Nanding Cajigan won over Alex Martin in the battle for third, 9-8 (7-4).

All Top 3 finishers in each division received medals, while the champions and runners-up also took home painted coconuts as trophies.

NATIONALS

From Page 28

for the Nationals after missing Wednesday's game where they lost to Quichocho, 80-87, and teamed up with Pete Iguel and Jayvan Tarkong in leading the Nationals' breakaway in the second half.

The Nationals were ahead by only two points at halftime, 41-39, when Tarkong, Iguel, and Rabauliman scored in spurts in the third increasing the lead to 10, 70-60.

The trio combined for 19 of the Nationals 29 points in the third period and James Camacho joined the scoring spree in the fourth for a 19-point win.

Iguel finished with 36 points, while Rabauliman and Tarkong nailed 21 and 16, respectively. Camacho added 12 markers, making nine of them from downtown.

In the first game, Sonny Lerio top-scored for Quichocho Law Office's eight-point triumph exploding for 31 points.

Quichoho, which lost to the Ol'Aces Friday, now has a 3-3 slate, while Diamond is still winless in four games.

First Game

Quichocho Law Office 93 – Lerio 31, Capalad 18, Itaas 14, Moises 9, Pantaleon 9, Doronilla 9, Tagle 3.

Diamond Auto Care 85 – Peredo 17, Muleta 13, Dayrit 11, Joyner 11, Brostrom 10, Camacho 8, Capalad 8, Talania 4, Marasigan 2,Gamboa 1.

Scoring by quarters: 21-19, 39-38, 65-53, 93-85.

Second Game

CNMI Nationals 104 – Iguel 36, Rabauliman 21, Tarkong 16, Camacho 12, Tumaquip 11, Johnson 6, Moses 2.

IT&E 85 – Mendiola 21, Ranola 21, De Vero 17, Montano 15, Artates 7, Mercurio 4.

Scoring by quarters: 24-17, 41-39, 70-60, 104-85.

CAMACHO

From Page 28

185.50 pinfalls.

Cal and Villavicencio settled for second and third places, respectively. Cal tallied only 660 pinfalls in the second day, while Villavicencio had 697.

Twelve other lady keglers joined the February roll-off. They were Diane Chong (686), Emi Williams (683), Gloria Omechelang (674), Elena Soll (639), Lala Taitano (639), Linda Yarobwemal (631), Mindy Taitano (629), Lillian Gutierrez 615), Gigi Zapanta (589), Carol McKenzie (570), Eileen Schardt (565), and Cora Muna (503).

In the 2009 Budweiser King of the Lanes race, Ador Dimaano dislodged first day leader Percy Omechelang from the top spot with the former scoring 857 pinfalls in the last day of the roll-off.

Omechelang took the lead after day one with his 835 pinfalls and returned in the second day, but scored only 816 pinfalls, which was good only for fourth overall.

Dimaano was still finding his rhythm in Game 1 recording only 187 pinfalls, but went berserk in the last three games with his 237 in Game 2, 207 in Game 3, and 226 pinfalls in Game 4 for an average of 214.25 pinfalls.

Raymond Zapanta finished third with his 825 pinfalls.

FINANCE

From Page 28

complete innings, when Finance started its comeback bid at the top of the fifth scoring five runs.

At the bottom of the fifth, NMC's first three batters were beaten to first, while Finance added seven more runs at the top of the sixth to take the lead, 15-10.

NMC lost its chances to regain the lead when the best it could do in the last two innings was to reach second base.

Lilian Aguon had five RBIs for NMC after going 3-for-5 at the plate, while Pauline Tudela was perfect at bat going 3-for-3 and making three RBIs. Four players added two RBIs apiece.

MEN'S
POI 17, DLNR 2

In the men's division game, Pacific Oriental, Inc. cruised to a 17-2 triumph over Department of Land and Natural Resources.

POI improved to a 6-6 record, while DLNR dropped to a 6-7 slate after scoring only at the bottom of the fifth inning.

POI started slow with only one run in the first two innings, but made a six-run top of the third and closed out with 10 runs in the last two innings for an easy win.

Shortstop Kyle Kaipat went 4-for-4 at bat and scored three runs, three doubles, and three RBIs. Centerfielder William Sablan had four RBIS and was 3-for-4 at the plate.

Docomo 27, P&S 20

In the other men's match, Docomo won a high-scoring game against P&S, 27-20.

Docomo shut out P&S in the last two innings to preserve the win.

After trailing by 12, 9-23, after four complete innings, P&S rallied with an 11-run top of the fifth. But P&S failed to complete a big comeback, as Docomo's defense tightened up in the last two innings allowing only one hit.

TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

AT&T PEBBLE BEACH NATIONAL PRO-AM COURSE SCORES

PEBBLE BEACH, California (AP)– Scores Saturday from the Pebble Beach National Pro-Am, a $6.1 million US PGA Tour event on three par-72 courses: 6,816-yard Pebble Beach Golf Links; 6,953-yard Poppy Hills; and 6,944-yard Spyglass Hill:

Final Round

Dustin Johnson	65b-69s-67p–201
Mike Weir	67p-69b-69s–205
Retief Goosen	68p-64b-74s–206
Bob Estes	68p-72b-67s–207
Mark Calcavecchia	67p-69b-71s–207
D.J. Trahan	67b-73s-68p–208
Kevin Chappell	68s-72p-68b–208
Bill Lunde	67b-70s-71p–208
Chris Stroud	69p-69b-70s–208
Sean O'Hair	71p-68b-70s–209
Shigeki Maruyama	69b-73s-67p–209
Mark Brooks	68b-69s-72p–209
Kenny Perry	71p-70b-68s–209
Vaughn Taylor	66b-75s-69p–210
Charley Hoffman	66s-70p-74b–210
Ted Purdy	68b-72s-70p–210
Jason Day	67b-75s-68p–210
Spencer Levin	71b-70s-69p–210
Charlie Wi	68b-69s-73p–210
Matt Kuchar	71b-71s-68p–210
Kevin Stadler	71p-71b-68s–210
Derek Fathauer	71p-71b-69s–211
Nick Watney	75p-69b-67s–211
Y.E. Yang	69b-70s-72p–211
Tim Herron	72s-68p-71b–211
Jeff Quinney	68b-73s-70p–211
Len Mattiace	69b-72s-70p–211
Jeff Overton	69b-70s-72p–211
Tim Clark	71s-71p-69b–211
Davis Love III	69b-72s-70p–211
Richard S. Johnson	71p-70b-70s–211
Michael Allen	67b-71s-73p–211
Arjun Atwal	68b-73s-71p–212
Jeff Klauk	73p-72b-67s–212
Steve Lowery	70b-69s-73p–212
John Mallinger	72b-71s-69p–212
Jim Furyk	71s-70p-71b–212
Aron Price	68p-69b-75s–212
Michael Letzig	69s-73p-71b–213
James Oh	73p-72b-68s–213
David Mathis	71b-75s-67p–213
Glen Day	73s-70p-70b–213
Rich Beem	66b-75s-72p–213
Pat Perez	73s-71p-69b–213
Scott Gutschewski	71b-72s-70p–213
Frank Lickliter II	72p-71b-70s–213
Robert Garrigus	65s-71p-77b–213
Peter Tomasulo	71p-70b-72s–213
Greg Owen	68b-73s-72p–213
Mark Wilson	70p-73b-70s–213
Troy Matteson	73b-71s-69p–213
Charles Howell III	72s-70p-71b–213
Charles Warren	74b-69s-70p–213
Jay Williamson	70p-75b-68s–213
J.J. Henry	71p-72b-71s–214
Jason Dufner	75b-68s-71p–214
Chris Smith	70b-75s-69p–214
Brad Adamonis	71b-72s-71p–214
Marc Leishman	72p-73b-69s–214
Mathew Goggin	70s-73p-71b–214
David Duval	73b-72s-69p–214
K.J. Choi	69b-75s-70p–214
Phil Mickelson	72s-71p-71b–214
Rick Price	70p-72b-72s–214
Jimmy Walker	71p-73b-70s–214
Matt Jones	71p-71b-72s–214
J.B. Holmes	74p-68b-72s–214
Brendon de Jonge	69b-74s-71p–214

By The Associated Press

LOCAL SCORES

BUDWEISER CAGING STANDINGS

CNMI Nationals 4	1	
IT& E	4	2
Ol'Aces	3	1
Quichocho Law Office	3	3
Docomo	2	2
Runnin' Rebels	1	4
Diamond Auto Fixers	0	4

BUDWEISER SOFTBALL STANDINGS

Men's Division

DCCA	14	0
CPA	10	2
Joeten Motor Jets	10	3
Docomo	10	4
Freedom Air	9	2
Beach Boys	9	3
No Zone	9	4
Legislature	9	5
P&S	6	6
POI	6	6
DLNR	6	7
CRM/DEQ	5	7
CHC	4	8
PSS	4	9
CUC	3	9
Law & Order	3	9
PIC	2	8
Customs	2	8
Mayor's	2	11
Hopwood	0	11

Women's Division

NMC	8	2
Finance	5	4
DCCA	4	5
CUC	4	4
CHC	1	7

2008 NMA Awards Banquet

PHOTOS By
ROSELYN B. MONROYO

2008 NMA Athlete of the Year (12-and-under age group) Gabriel Race is flanked by NMA president Kurt Barnes, right, and vice president Lou Wabol during the 2008 NMA Awards Banquet at the Minatchom Atdao Pavilion last week.

2008 NMA Co-Athletes of the Year (18-and-under age group) Jacque Wonenberg, left, and Jenequa Benavente of MHS.

2008 NMA Athlete of the Year (14-and-under age group) Brandon Phillips.

Angelo Jones receives his 2008 NMA Athlete of the Year trophy (12-and-under age group).

Marianas Visitors Authority's Martin Duenas holds the plaque of appreciation awarded to MVA for supporting NMA's activities.

Wolf Mojica holds the plaque of appreciation given to DFS Saipan for its continued support to NMA's tournaments

2008 Male Road Runner of the Year Jack Kabiriel.

2008 Female Road Runner of the Year Mamiko Oshima-Berger.

The Bennett family, from left, Lilian, Ambrose, 2008 NMA Athlete of the Year (open division) Yvonne, and sister Yvette.

Lawrence Camacho, second left, receives the President's Award for his contribution to the success of the 2008 Oceania Area Championships held on Saipan.

No pot charge for swimmer Phelps after photo

Now that Michael Phelps won't face drug charges, he can try to distance himself from a photo that showed the Olympian smoking a marijuana pipe. **24**

Saipan Tribune
Sports

Aqua rallies past World Resort, Hyatt wins

Gil Gapor drilled 13 of his 21 points in the fourth quarter to lift Aqua Resort Club to a 91-89 victory over Saipan World Resort in the 2009 Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino Invitational Basketball League. **26**

Schuler outlasts Race in open final

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Players and spectators alike were treated to a fitting finale in the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament with CNMI's coach Jeff Race dueling former Drake University standout Kirk Schuler in the men's open singles title match late Monday afternoon at the American Memorial Park tennis court.

The more than hourlong match ended in a close slugfest with Schuler eking out a hard-earned 9-8 (7-4) victory over Race.

"Hats off to coach Jeff, he really gave me a hard time. What a way to return to competitive tennis and win against a very good player/coach," Schuler said, who joined in a tournament on Saipan for the first time since arriving on the island late last year.

Race also had good words for Schuler saying his foe has a good ser-

See SCHULER on Page 26

Kirk Schuler, left, serves against Jeff Race, right, during their title match in the men' open singles division in the 2009 Coconut Classic Tennis Tournament Monday at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Finance stuns NMC in women's softball

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Finance caught a big fish in the league-leading Northern Marianas College, pulling off a come-from-behind 18-10 victory in the women's division of the 2008 Inter-Government/Business Slowpitch Softball League Monday night at the Capital Hill Ballfield.

Bego Camacho allowed only two hits and the rest of Finance's defense shut out NMC in the last three innings to record an upset.

Finance now has a 5-4 record moving up from third to second place, while NMC is still on top of the field, but dropped to an 8-2 slate. NMC absorbed its first lost at the hands of Commonwealth Utilities Corp. last month, 9-10.

NMC seemed headed for its ninth win leading by seven, 10-3, after four

See FINANCE on Page 26

Nationals, Quichocho Law Office recover

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI Nationals reclaimed the lead, while Quichocho Law Office also regained its form as the two teams thwarted separate foes in the 2008-2009 BANMI/Budweiser Basketball League Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

The Nationals capitalized on the depleted crew of IT&E to cruise to a 104-85 victory, while Quichocho outclassed Diamond Auto Care, 93-85.

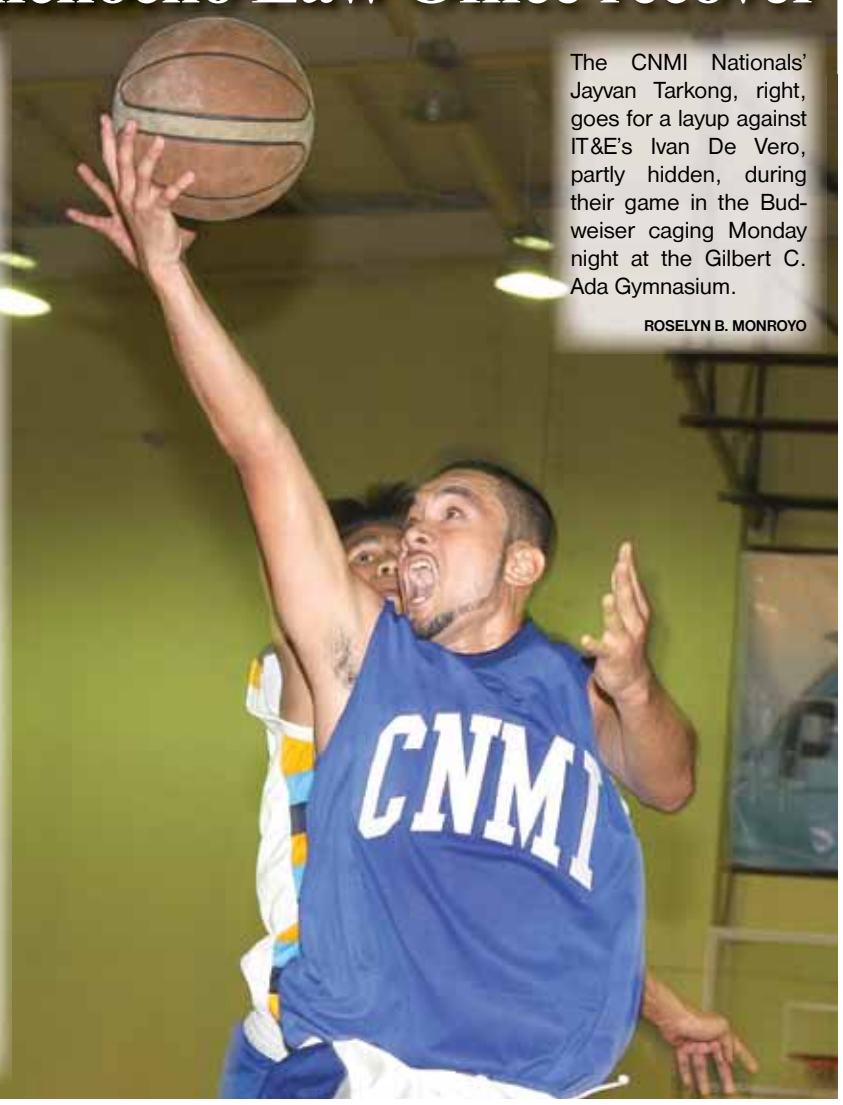
The win improved the Nationals' record to 4-1 and put them in solo lead, half a game ahead of IT&E, which dropped to a 4-2 slate.

The Nationals for the second straight game missed gunner Jericho Cruz, but it was IT&E, which was hurt more by the absence of its three key players.

Cruz, who did not play Wednesday night due to flu, was on Tinian Monday night playing for Hyatt Regency Saipan in an invitational league. Wowie Abuel, Kae Bernardo, and Jun Estolas were also in the same league playing for various teams.

Rabauliman returned to action

See NATIONALS on Page 26



The CNMI Nationals' Jayvan Tarkong, right, goes for a layup against IT&E's Ivan De Vero, partly hidden, during their game in the Budweiser caging Monday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Camacho, Dimaano rule February roll-offs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Diane Camacho returned to Saipan Bowling Center Monday night with better form en route to winning the 2009 Budweiser Queen of the Lanes title for February.

Camacho played in the first day of the February roll-off Sunday night, but her 700 pinfalls in four games was good only for third place behind Yho Villavicencio's 702 and Ron Cal's 703.

In the last day, Camacho came back with vengeance, knocking 742 pins to overtake Cal and Villavicencio, who also played in the second day, but scored lower than their first day outputs.

Participants in the monthly roll-off can bowl on both days, but only the higher score will be counted.

Camacho had a good start in the second day with her 202 pinfalls in Game 1, slowed down in Game 2 with 161, but improved in the last two games with 181 and 198 pinfalls for a total of 742. She had an average of

See CAMACHO on Page 26

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
2009 Budweiser King and Queen of the Lanes February roll-offs winners Ador Dimaano and Diane Camacho.